Foreign
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50
ANNIVERSARY
1941 - 1991

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-088
Tuesday
7 May 1991

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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NOTICE TO READERS: On 6 May 1991, the DAILY REPORT will begin phasing in new radio and television sourcelines that reflect how a station identifies itself. This change eliminates the "Domestic Service" and "Television Service" designations in favor of the station identification as broadcast. The presence of a new sourceline reflects this change in policy, rather than the establishment of a new station or network.

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab Maghreb Union Committee Issues Communique

LD0405202191 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] The communique of the 15th session of the Arab Maghreb Union Follow-Up Committee, which was issued at the conclusion of the session's proceedings yesterday evening in Rabat, said that the proceedings centered on assessment of the progress taking place in building the union and in organizational issues related to the dates of specialized ministerial committees meetings.

In this respect, it was emphasized that focus on the actual achievement of the union's objectives and programs of action should be continued through determining those joint action priorities which bear a direct link to the citizens within the Maghreb area.

The communique added that the Follow-Up Committee surveyed aspects of cooperation with the UN Development Program and the union's relations with European countries in the Mediterranean basin. The committee examined means of implementing the resolutions of the third ordinary session of the Presidency Council, concerning Maghreb Youth Day celebrations on 10 June.

'Arafat, Lebanon's Ibrahim Meet With Bendjedid

LD0605202891 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Developments in the Palestinian question and the situation in Lebanon in the light of the militia disarmament and the extension of Lebanese sovereignty to all Lebanese territory were the topics of talks today that brought together Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid, Palestinian president Mr. 'Arafat, and Mr. Muhsin Ibrahim, representative of the Lebanese Nationalist Movement, in the presence of Messrs. Faruq Qaddumi, and Abu al-'Izz, ambassador of the state of Palestine. After his meeting with the president, Mr. 'Arafat said:

[Begin 'Arafat recording] I have thanked the brother president for the principled and firm position of Algeria—president, government and people—on the side of their brothers the Palestinians and the Lebanese, and on the side of the cause of holy Jerusalem, the first of the two qiblahs [direction Muslims face to pray], and the third of the two holy places, the place from where Muhammad—prayers and blessings of God be upon him—ascended to the heavens, and the place of birth of Jesus Christ [as heard], the peace of God be upon him.

The brother president listened to the details of the efforts made by my brother Muhsin Ibrahim, the envoy of the Lebanese Government to his brothers the Palestinians, to insure a fraternal and sound Palestinian-Lebanese relationship that will help us all face our external enemies, the enemies of the Arab nation, and particularly to end the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. Brother Muhsin also explained the efforts made by the brothers in the Syrian leadership, and his recent meetings held with Syrian officials to contribute to resolving this problem.

Afterwards, I briefed the president on the meetings held between the Palestinian delegation and Mr. Baker, in Jerusalem, and our position to any attempt underway. I stressed the Palestinian constants based on international legality, away from any effects, such as those of the Gulf war, primary among which is the right of return, self-determination, and the setting up of our own independent state, with Jerusalem as its capital. [end recording]

For his part, Muhsin Ibrahim made the following statement:

[Begin Ibrahim recording] This joint Lebanese-Palestinian visit that we are making, accompanied by the dear friend and great brother, the militant President Yasir 'Arafat, has been an occasion during which we have had the honor of meeting President Chadli Bendjedid.

I had the opportunity to present a review of the development of the situation in Lebanon, whether concerning the drive of national domestic reconciliation, or the efforts made to liberate the south. President Bendjedid blessed what has been achieved so far at the level of an internal political solution, and he expressed, on behalf of Algeria, support for the struggle of the Lebanese nationalists in order to finish the struggle for the liberation of South Lebanon.

I am pleased to say, in this respect, that the position which was stressed by President Yasir 'Arafat, during this meeting, and which he has already stressed yesterday at the meeting of the Palestinian leadership, this position once again [word indistinct] embodies the full response of the PLO to all the political and security measures aimed at securing legitimate Lebanese authority on all Lebanese territory. This position also advances in the direction of strengthening the Lebanese ability to successfully manage the problem of southern Lebanon, as the resistance action and national steadfastness must complete the political action aimed at implementing Resolution No. 425, which provides for complete Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory. [end recording]

Arab League Official Receives Palestinian Envoy

NC0205192291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1731 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 2 May (MENA)—As'ad al-As'ad, acting secretary general of the Arab League, today received Sa'id Kamal, Palestinian ambassador to Cairo, who presented his credentials as his country's permanent delegate to the Arab League's General Secretariat.

Kamal said he hoped that Arab solidarity will continue to progress on a scientific and practical basis and that the bitter experiences and dangerous crises through which the Arab people have passed will serve to consolidate this process.

The Palestinian ambassador said the Arab League will enter a new stage after Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid assumes the post of secretary general, noting that Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid is a veteran diplomat with many years of experience on the international scene. Kamal said: We are looking forward to Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid's future efforts to restore solidarity and promote a better atmosphere for joint Arab action.

Faruq Qaddumi, chief of the PLO political department, will lead the Palestinian delegation to the Arab League Council session which is scheduled to open in Cairo on 15 May.

Arab Boycott Office Blacklists Foreign Firms

JN0405111691 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0830 GMT 4 May 91

[All company names as received]

[Text] Damascus, 4 May (SANA)—A statement by the Arab office for the boycott of Israel, which concluded its 64th session Thursday, says 173 new [as received] companies have been placed on the blacklist. The blacklisted firms include 63 branches of companies previously on the list.

The list includes 104 companies in which Robert Maxwell is a shareholder, and two U.S. companies, Lake Lake Products and Phoenix Wire.

Among the 63 branches are 59 belonging to the British company Cortoldz; the other four are U.S., Japanese, Dutch, and Danish.

The statement says 10 companies were deleted from the blacklist and eight others are no longer threatened with a boycott.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Views Mideast 'Political Developments'

LD0605132391 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 6 May 91

[Excerpts] Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, began a visit to Algeria this morning.

He was welcomed at Houari Boumediene International Airport by the Foreign Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali and the ambassador of the state of Palestine to Algeria. The Palestinian president is expected to later meet Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid.

Mr. 'Arafat told our correspondent Nacera Bouzid at the airport VIP lounge:

[Begin recording] ['Arafat] [passage omitted] There are naturally two important points. The first one concerns the current (?international) political developments in the Arab arena, including the latest results brought about by Baker's visit and his meetings with the Palestinian delegation and the Arab delegations during his latest tour. With me is my brother Muhsin Ibrahim, the secretary general of the Lebanese National Movement and envoy of the Lebanese leadership and President Hirawi, who is acting as a mediator between the Lebanese brothers and us, as well as to inform the brother president of these good results between the Lebanese brothers and us. All this is achieved based on this important role played by the brother president, his government, and his people, as well as by their Lebanese and Palestinian brothers.

[Bouzid] Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, can you tell us what point was reached by the efforts being made by the PLO, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan to [word indistinct] the participation of the PLO participation in the peace efforts of the region?

['Arafat] This is left to the brother his excellency the minister [as heard] because [word indistinct] this is one of the important points which will be discussed at the forthcoming foreign ministers' conference in Cairo, God willing. [end recording]

'Arafat Comments on Palestinian Autonomy, Finances

TA0605202991 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1810 GMT 6 May 91

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Mehmet Ali Birand in Tunisia; date not given—recorded in English with Turkish subtitles; from the "32d Day" program]

[Text] [Birand] Why did you support Saddam Husayn? Was this not risky? Did you not make a mistake?

['Arafat] I was obliged. He was our strongest supporter. Until now, many decisions were adopted concerning the Palestinian problem, but none of these were implemented. For the first time, Saddam Husayn adopted our cause and established a link between our cause and the crisis. As Palestinians, we can never forget this. My people will also never forget this.

[Birand] The Palestinians regarded Saddam as a savior on a white horse. The outcome was not as expected, however. Were you not disappointed?

['Arafat] No. Some Palestinians may have been disappointed. My people were extremely encouraged, however, as a result of the linkage established between the Gulf crisis and the oil issue. Whatever the outcome, we do not forget the following: Sultan 'Abd-al-Hamid also refused to sell our territory to the Jews despite all the pressure. Naturally, he paid the price for this. This is a matter of principle.

[Birand] Mr. Chairman, you were criticized by many people, including certain Palestinians, for supporting Saddam. Is your leadership not in jeopardy?

['Arafat] My leadership stems from the people. Otherwise, I would not be representing them.

[Birand] In other words, you are sure of yourself.

['Arafat] I am sure of my people. I am sure of what I am doing. We are proud of our democracy. This is the most significant and strongest aspect of our struggle.

[Birand] You are known as a surviving leader. Do you believe that you will be able to survive this crisis as well?

['Arafat] This is not a personal issue. My main target is to enable my people to live freely on their own territory like all peoples. This is the responsibility of the Turks as well. You must not forget that we are also paying the price of the defeat following World War I.

[Birand] How is this crisis affecting the Palestinian problem?

['Arafat] Very badly.

[Birand] Why?

['Arafat] We incurred the greatest damages. We were the largest and wealthiest group in Kuwait. Our loss is approximately $10-11 billion. Moreover, no one paid us compensation, not the Americans, not Europe, and not Japan. Our people living in the occupied territories lost the aid they were receiving from their relatives. This, in turn, totals approximately $1.5 billion yearly.

[Birand] How will your organization survive under these circumstances? On the one hand, you suffered materially; and on the other hand, wealthy Arab countries announced that they will stop helping you financially.

['Arafat] The same Arab countries are giving money to the Americans. As you know, the Ottoman Empire was based on the waqf system and a portion of this income used to go to Saudi Arabia. You should know this. This is what documents teach us.

[Birand] In other words, you are telling me that the PLO emerged from this Gulf crisis with losses.

['Arafat] From a financial point of view, yes.

[Birand] What about the political aspect?

['Arafat] No. From the political viewpoint, we gained. Now, everyone realizes that the Palestinian problem must be solved. The link initiated by Saddam Husayn continues. As it is, Baker is coming to the region with plans. President Bush officially announced at Congress that something has to be done for the Palestinian people and that otherwise, there will be double standards. No one, including the Turkish people, can accept this. I am confident that you, too, will not forget your Palestinian brothers, because this is as much your problem as it is ours. This is the most important point.

[Birand] In a way, you are saying that Saddam lost the war, but you won the political war.

['Arafat] Al-Nasir also lost the war against France and Britain. As you will recall, Germany and Japan also lost a war, but they became the greatest economic powers in the world. Therefore, winning a military war is not tantamount to winning a political victory.

[Birand] The Americans are now exerting great efforts. Will these efforts bear any fruit? Will they be able to change Israel's attitude? Or is it still an illusion to think about a solution?

['Arafat] This has become an international issue. The Americans are obliged to demonstrate that double standards will not be applied.

[Birand] According to your estimates, will this recent initiative yield any results?

['Arafat] I hope so. According to information I received and according to my assessments, the main goal of the Americans is to normalize relations between Israel and the Arabs. The Palestinian problem is at the bottom of the agenda.

[Birand] You and the PLO constitute the most important obstacle to starting the negotiations. More correctly, Israel is insistent on not allowing you to represent the Palestinians. If a solution is to be reached, are you ready to make a sacrifice on this subject?

['Arafat] They tried this many times. As in the case of the Camp David agreement, we sought other solutions, but nothing worked. There cannot be a solution without the PLO. The PLO is the identity card of the Palestinian people. The PLO has become one with its people. It only wants to attain the rights of its people and secure the implementation of UN resolutions.

[Birand] In other words, you are saying that a peace conference cannot be convened and negotiations cannot be conducted without your participation and that of the PLO.

['Arafat] Yes. They want to exclude the PLO because the PLO reflects the genuine wishes of the Palestinian people. The U.S. Administration accepted the self-administration of the 1,800 people living on the Falklands. It refuses, however, to grant this right to 6 million Palestinians. This is the most basic right in the world. They are still treating us like red Indians. The flame inside us is stronger than ever. I believe in history. Our opponents are opposing historical facts. My faith is complete. This is my goal. It is shining ['Arafat points at a picture of the Dome of the Rock]. No one can stop me as long as I am unable to pray there with you.

[Birand] What do you expect of Turkey on the Palestinian issue?

['Arafat] Many things. Especially in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, Turkey assumed an extremely important position from the viewpoint of regional security. In this new order, it is your political, historical, and national responsibility to help the Palestinian people. Please, do not turn your back on us. We need you.

[Birand] This is all very well, but the Turkish public was very surprised by one specific attitude on your part. You drew a parallel between Kuwait and the Cyprus issue. You created the impression that the two issues were identical. Why did you do this?

['Arafat] Turkey claims that international law must be applied in Cyprus. If this is to be implemented in Kuwait, I said, then it must also be implemented in other issues. As it is, Mr. Ozal proposed a solution. I, in turn, offered to mediate. So far, there has not been any response to this.

[Birand] Are not Kuwait and Cyprus two very different issues?

['Arafat] Yes, but I did not go into detail. I talked about a general approach. If international law exists, it must apply in every matter. I said that it must be discussed on the same platform. I did not mention details, only principles. Moreover, Denktas is my brother, my friend. We cooperated during all four Islamic conferences. You can ask him.

[Birand] We last met three years ago. At the time you told me that you can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Is the light still there? If so, is it stronger or weaker?

['Arafat] Stronger, and it comes from the same direction.

[Birand] Are you still optimistic?

['Arafat] Definitely. I am a man of history. Many occupiers have come here and gone. Where are they now?

[Birand] Are you not tired at all?

['Arafat] No.

[Birand] It has been 27 years.

['Arafat] Praying and reading the Koran. These give me sufficient strength.

Algeria

Leader of New HAMAS Movement Addresses Rally

LD0405164491 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 May 91

[Excerpts] A huge public rally was organized in Hassi Messaoud yesterday evening on the occasion of the setting up of the bureau of the Movement of Islamic Society HAMAS [Harakat al-Mujtama' al-Islami]. Sheykh Mahfoud Nahnah, the movement leader, emphasized in his speech the principles on which the movement is based—science, work, and justice. [passage omitted]

On the possibility of alliance with the other leading Islamic circles, Sheykh Nahnah said: [Begin Sheykh Nahnah recording] No political organization preceded the Association of Guidance [Jam'iat al-Irshad, which preceded the setting up of HAMAS] in putting forwrd the issue of alliance. Thanks to God Almighty, the proposal was ours. We extended our hands to those concerned, to those working in the Islamic field, those with integrity, and nationalists. [passage omitted]

There was a deliberate delay by the Interior Ministry, which acted very slow and deferred giving us accreditation to the last minute. We, being aware of the rules of the political and democratic game, must also adapt to the reality of this game. It is impossible for us to make our Arab and Islamic Algeria miss the opportunity—we will, with God's help, continue on this path in terms of candidacy and election. May God grant us victory. [end recording]

Replies to FIS Criticism

LD0405214591 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] In an interview with the Algerian newspaper AFAQ, Abassi Madani [Islamic Salvation Front—FIS leader] announced that an alliance with the HAMAS movement is impossible because it belongs to (?an underground) system.

The coordinator of HAMAS [Harakat al-Mujtama' al-Islami], [name indistinct], says:

[Begin recording] On the one hand, we consider that Abassi Madani is too great to say such things. On the other, we hope that he and other Islamic activists will do good.

I think that these statements attacking the HAMAS movement and its leader, Mahfoud Nahnah, are an attempt to divide the Islamic ranks [words indistinct]. We also think that the pressure of the grassroots, the FIS grassroots, on Abassi Madani to respond to the Islamic alliance is perhaps what made him behave hysterically and issue such judgments which are harmful to the unity of the Islamic ranks and could divide them. These statements in fact are against the Muslim ethics. As the prophet said: A Muslim is not someone who slanders, curses, or utters obscenities.

As for Mahfoud being a card in the hands of the regime, this is quite far fetched. The stances of Mahfoud are well known and historic. He is known to be faithful to the Islamic call and Islamic movement and loves everything good and unity for this country and loves to see the Islamic solution winning. [end recording]

Yemeni Foreign Minister, Lebanon's Al-Huss Visit

LD0505221991 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 5 May 91

[Excerpt] Presidential activity: First, today the president received 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, Yemeni minister of state for foreign affairs. Their talks focused on cooperation issues and current Arab and international affairs.

On leaving the Presidency of the Republic, al-Dali said: [Begin al-Dali recording] I have had the honor of carrying a written message to the president from Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdullah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, concerning bilateral relations between the two fraternal countries, and also [words indistinct] the Arab region, and [words indistinct] efforts made to [word indistinct] this grave stage witnessed by the Arab region. [end recording]

President Bendjedid also met today with former Lebanese Prime Minister Salim al-Huss. After the meeting, al-Huss made the following statement:

[Begin al-Huss recording] I am pleased to have had this meeting with President Chadli Bendjedid during this visit I am paying to Algeria at the invitation of his excellency the foreign minister. It was a good occasion to discuss with the president various affairs of interest to the Arab world these days, and particularly Lebanon. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Al-Huss on Talks

LD0605153591 Algiers APS in English 1009 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Algiers, 06/05/91 (APS)—"The talks we held centered upon various questions that interest the Arab world and Lebanon in particular", stated Dr. Salim al-Huss, Lebanese former prime minister, at the close of his talks with President Chadli Bendjedid.

"This meeting, he added, allowed us to renew our greetings to Algeria through its president for the role it played these last years in seeking a solution for which Lebanon was longing. This role was embodied in Algeria's efforts at the Arab higher tripartite committee, as well as committees set up in the past at the Arab level for the examination of this question".

Furthermore, he pointed out that President Chadli Bendjedid paid a particular attention to developments of the situation in Lebanon and enquired about the process of al-Ta'if accords' application. The talks, noted he, tackled all positive aspects, the prospects for Lebanon's future as well as the situation within the Arab world. As for the process of Lebanon-Palestinian negotiations upon questions of disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, particularly the Palestinian ones, and the security of Palestinians in south Lebanon, Dr. al-Huss specified that the climate of these negotiations was very favourable and contacts were carrying on between the two parties. Eventually, he pointed out that he was convinced that these negotiations' results would be in favour of the settlement of the Lebanese question.

Minister's Working Visit to Yemen Reviewed

LD0505134391 Algiers APS in English 1011 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Algiers, 5 May (APS)—Minister Delegate to Vocational Training Abdenour Keramane paid from May 1 to May 3 1991 a working visit to the Republic of Yemen within the framework of the fourth session of a joint commission of cooperation between the two countries.

During his stay, Keramane was successively received by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Prime Minister Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, as well as by the minister of planning. Furthermore, he visited the center of professional training in Sanaa, that was built up and equipped by Algeria.

The works of the joint commission allowed to review relations of bilateral cooperation and draw its headlines in economic and cultural fields by the signature of proceedings in this regard.

It is worth recalling that this meeting took place at a significant moment in the sense that it is the first meeting after the reunification of the two Yemens and after the Gulf events.

Financial Protocol Signed With Italy

LD0405145791 Algiers APS in English 1019 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] Rome, 4 May (APS)—A protocol of agreement of cooperation between Algeria and Italy was signed on Thursday in Rome between the Italian Foreign Affairs Minister De Michelis and the Algerian Minister of Economy Ghazi Hidouci.

This protocol of agreements pave the way to the improvement of cooperation with the establishment of a real partnership in all sectors and all fields.

This protocol of agreement is based on two series of financial accords complementary for their contents and effects.

The first series consists in a "financial credit" of two billion and a half dollars (2.5) in three annual portions which comes in the frame of the reorganization policy of the Algerian external debt elaborated by Algeria's bank to ensure to the balance of payment of Algeria a movement towards a balanced situation.

The second series of accords contained in the Algero-Italian protocol is a "financial [word indistinct]" linked to exports of Italian goods and services, destined to relaunch investment in Algeria. The volume of this second series of accords reaches 4 billion and a half dollars (4.5) repayable over 10 years with the rate of interest of the OEDC [Organization of European Cooperation and Development].

[Algiers APS in English at 1025 GMT on 4 May in a Rome-datelined report adds: The Algero-Italian protocol of accords which was signed on Thursday in Rome by the Italian Foreign Affairs Minister De Michelis and the Algerian Minister of Economy Ghazi Hidouci is "the most important accord that Italy signed with the Mediterranean countries", de Michelis declared to the ALGERIAN NEWS AGENCY (APS). De Michelis who put a stress on the regional and international context in which is concluded this Algero-Italian (?accord), said that it will contribute to promote stable and mutually fruitful relations between the [word indistinct] groups of the Mediterranean Sea". The Algerian Minister of Economy Ghazi Hidouci recalled that the situation of economic crisis prevailing in the world and the climate of hostility which characterizes in a general way the north-south relations, to stress to the Italian press that "this Algero-Italian accord is the manifestation of the convergence of the two countries' approaches in the field of cooperation but also in the field of medium and long term vision on what the Mediterranean Sea, the Arab Maghreb Union-EEC relations and the Euro-Arab relations should be."]

Egypt

President Mubarak Delivers Labor Day Speech

NC0105150091 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 1 May 91

[Speech by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak on Labor Day at the Railways Club in Cairo—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Brothers and sisters, our annual meeting to celebrate Labor Day is one in which we renew our hope for a better life. You, our men and women, have embodied a shining image of Egypt's life throughout the ages. We give thanks to the Almighty that we meet today when Egypt, with its dignity intact, can hold its head up high because of its historic stand to support the Arab man's right to live in independence on his land, safe from any unjust aggression or armed invasion which is aimed at endangering Arab existence and undermining pan-Arab security under cover of false slogans and claims.

We thank the Almighty that our meeting takes place today after our valiant Armed Forces have written another glorious chapter in their historic mission of defending Arab land and protecting pan-Arab security through their superior military performance, advanced scientific planning, and great bravery, which gained them the appreciation and respect of the international community and the highest-ranking military commanders of the major states.

It behooves us to greet our brave heroes on this day and to record our pride in their glorious efforts for the sake of God and the homeland to uphold rights and principles. We thank the Almighty that our meeting takes place today when Egypt is playing a central role in a new Arab structure, which will achieve Arab security on new foundations based on genuine ties of Arab fraternity and common interests. This new structure will provide a starting point for a new Arab life that seeks to make up for missed opportunities, learn from the experience of the recent and distant past, and present a realistic image of a future in which we can achieve economic and social development on solid bases which will enhance Arab stability. Such stability will support the role we have to play in building the new world order.

We also thank God that we are meeting today when the eyes of the world are on Egypt as a result of the sincere recognition of the Egyptian people's role in establishing security and peace and attaining stability in this turbulent part of the world. Egypt has thus become the scene of frequent international gatherings at which our opinion is sought and our role serves as a source of inspiration. At the same time, a commitment is felt to bolster Egypt's economy and to extend every possible assistance until the Egyptians attain the secure and dignified life that is their right.

We thank God that we are meeting today when all international efforts are directed toward finding lasting and just solutions to enforce the Palestinian people's rights on their land. Egypt is playing a prominent and positive part to achieve this objective. No one can deny or ignore our unchanging, unhesitating, and unshakable role regardless of any difficulties we may face, any ingratitude we may meet, and any stabs in the back we may receive. We are working for the sake of principle. Individuals come and go, but the truth remains and shines, despite the exploitation and oneupmanship of some people. [applause]

We thank God that we are meeting today when all hearts and minds alertly look forward to the near and distant future from a new perspective and when views are being voiced freely by all writers. They are offering their views on what kind of future we want for ourselves, a future we will build with our own hands, in the context of what we have agreed to describe as the call for change.

Let us discuss together the meaning of change and the nature of the change we all want.

Brother citizens, you know very well that I am not a lover of slogans. I do not like to exaggerate when I speak of the various stages of national action. When we called for a great awakening, we were responding to the feelings of millions of people, who sensed an urgent need to embark on a new course in thought and action. We do not accept a general sense of dependence and other such social phenomena when we call for reconstruction. The call for a great awakening was a political and social necessity, so that work could be undertaken seriously amid a full understanding of prevailing circumstances. There is no way to achieve the progress we want for our country except through a constant vigilance that defies stagnation, awakens zeal, and inspires ideas of development and progress in the proper scientific way. This cannot be achieved by slogans which have been rendered meaningless through improper use. Slogans have turned into meaningless sayings which are unable to build, achieve, or add something new.

There is no doubt that the battle for the liberation of Kuwait represented a historic economic, social, and political turning point. Thus, we now live in a new stage, in every sense of the word. This is true both in our domestic affairs and in our Arab and external affairs.

Let me start by speaking about the domestic situation. The people are calling for what everyone describes as a change. I am on the side of the people. I have vowed not to initiate any domestic, Arab, or international policy except in response to the wishes of our honest and prudent people. [applause]

I will never act in a vacuum. I will never ignore the correct vision and the priorities of the masses. I hardly need state that our decision to reject the Iraqi invasion of the state of Kuwait was simply a reaffirmation of the views of millions of our people. [applause] The Egyptians were virtually unanimous in opposing the occupation of an Arab territory. Their stand was in keeping with Egypt's leading role and its history in the Arab region.

As I mention the call for a change, I wish to explain to you the meaning of the change that can lead to the achievement of goals. Change does not mean that you replace officials but maintain the same standards in executive policies or in political and democratic endeavors. Change, brothers and sisters, is not a game played by veteran politicians that seeks to contain the transitory sentiments of the masses and obscure the goals by bringing in some new faces.

We will not play this game, and we do not encourage such practices. I have an objective view of the change that is needed in this phase. [applause] This view takes into account the essence of our problems and our objectives. I am confident that this is what the public wants. We must first clarify the essence and objectives of our policies, and only then can we move on to replacing officials, embarking on new phases, and formulating the appropriate policies that promote the interests of the public. We must always seek action, but only after we have formulated clear policies.

This raises another question: Can change be confined to those in the highest echelons? Should we reshuffle the cabinet or replace one top executive with another? The answer, in my opinion, is that the true change, the change for which we long and which we are ready to cooperate to achieve, should encompass the big picture. The change should be applied to the performance of the government as well as the quality of life for the various sectors of society.

I would not be exaggerating if I say that we have a profound need for a new life in this new phase. I believe that millions will agree with me on that point.

I do not exaggerate if I say that we are in dire need of a new life at this new stage, and I believe that millions share this view. We need a new life in which every citizen defines his stand on his country's problems and finds his proper place in the process of development. This applies to everyone in every walk of life in our country, the school and the home, the university and the factory, the political parties, the media departments, and every Egyptian family. For example, laws may be issued to streamline the education system, but education will only be improved when teachers understand their mission and work sincerely to help raise the new generations. Education will only be improved when students respect their teachers, when they have a sincere desire to learn and study, and when they are guided by high principles and objectives.

A family that pays no attention to the upbringing of its sons can spoil whatever the school and university may build. All the scientific efforts and material resources we have devoted to family planning, with the goal of ensuring a dignified life for coming generations, will serve no purpose and bear no real fruit unless the public comes to understand that overpopulation poses a danger to our economy and to the chances for a good life for our sons in this generation and future ones.

Suffice it to say that our population is increasing. It rose from 41.7 million in 1981 to 54.6 million in 1990, an increase of 13 million people in less than 10 years. For this reason, the government is failing to keep up despite its hard work. Production is failing to keep up, despite having increased. We need greater production just to stay even.

No matter what legislation and regulations are issued by the state, laws can only be effective if they are efficiently enforced by departments and establishments and if they are obeyed by citizens who respect the supremacy of the law and believe that life is not lived by grabbing opportunities in the dark.

The number of factories may multiply to increase production and provide greater employment, but returns will diminish or disappear if workers and administrators do not work to the best of their ability or if they produce shoddy goods that cannot compete in the marketplace.

I can give hundreds of examples, but let me just say that the necessary change is to change ourselves, to change what threatens sound performance and to change the values which define our ties with the society in which we live and which we seek to develop.

The government and all its departments are working in the service of the people. A minister, his subordinates, and all the ministry's departments are at the citizen's service. Every citizen is at the service of society. The good society is one which is for all its sons, young and old, rich and poor. It supports those with limited incomes until they are able to attain their right to a dignified life. It supports the able ones so that they can produce and contribute, pay their dues to the state, and promote social harmony. The government seeks to provide job opportunities for those who can work and opportunities for self-advancement for those capable of producing. It seeks to establish human cohesion and interdependence which achieves social justice and peace.

If I talk about our political life, I can say that the desired change must be in the direction of further responsible democratic practice. Democracy is not merely a group of lifeless texts which can become devoid of meaning through faulty practice. Constitutions in totalitarian states, which moved toward parliamentary democracy and multiparty systems in the past few years, included many words about democracy and freedom which never came to life.

Parties in long-standing democracies are more than supporters of a particular newspaper or a group of people which has no specific approach, goal, or style. A party is not merely a number of deputies represented in a chamber of deputies. A party, every party, must be an integrated democratic structure which lives with the people and expresses the interests of the various strata of the masses as it sees fit. A party, every party, is a school which educates new generations based on a sound grasp of the meaning and objectives of political activity as a science, a way of thinking, and a commitment to principles and ideologies.

Therefore, the parties' organizational structures must be built along democratic lines, so the right man is in the right place. Popular action must have specific approaches that can make a genuine contribution to tackling problems in a nationalistic manner which eliminates fanaticism and maneuvering and attracts popular support. If the parties have solid popular foundations, authority can be transferred from one party to another through free elections.

As leader of the National Democratic Party, I announce from this platform on this day of labor and laborers that we will initiate such change within the party shortly. [applause]

Brothers and sisters, I am confident that when the party of the popular majority sets a sound example of democratic structure and practice, this will reflect positively on our party life in general. Only then can we say that we have achieved a fundamental change in our pursuit of a new life in a new stage.

Hence, the change we are eager to achieve in this new stage emanates from one broad foundation built on a clear-cut and specific essence and objectives. Change will extend to three basic fields, the social, the political, and the economic.

Even if change in these three fields proceeds in parallel and in an integrated manner, I must place social change at the top. Social change means change in the conduct of the masses. This change must reflect our affiliation with the Egypt of tomorrow. It expresses new codes of behavior in doing one's duty, creating social cohesion, shouldering responsibility both at school and within the family, demonstrating commitment to spiritual values in word and deed, and dealing with oneself and with others. As I said earlier, this is the responsibility of the entire community.

We see examples provided by several states which are only different from us in terms of the success they have achieved in building an individual on the basis of his full commitment to his duties toward society and of society's commitment to its obligations toward him. In this way, these states have achieved high standards of progress.

This is followed by political change in pursuit of an approach to government which achieves integrated action. A council of ministers is not merely a group of ministers; it is a homogenous working team which implements an evolving working program. A council of ministers is not a number of camps competing for authority or expressing conflicting visions and concepts. It is a single cell which moves with a unique rhythm toward national goals and works to develop ministerial performance in a manner which guarantees that the correct decisions are adopted swiftly and soundly implemented.

All this means greater democracy in the running of the country's affairs. This democracy should be built on a clear approach, a shared vision, integrated thinking, and collective responsibility within a single framework. As I have said on previous occasions, every ministry is not an independent government. Similarly, every governorate is not an island. This is the way we can achieve the change which fulfills the demands of the new life in this new stage.

What lies ahead for us is the relentless pursuit of greater democracy to bolster the legislative structure through solid parliamentary traditions which enable the people to monitor the executive authority's performance in the proper manner. This must be accompanied by a new party structure which develops the multiparty system into a strongly based democratic arena where views and ideas compete and which fosters the people's trust in the political structure. Popular action must serve as a shield for society and an incentive for all national powers to undertake serious democratic action that reaches remote villages, small towns, and residential neighborhoods. This will ultimately achieve the real cohesion necessary to join the procession toward a new life in a new stage.

On this, I would like to reiterate that we are not seeking mere form. The people want an integrated and positive democracy. I take the people's side, in this and all matters. [applause] I repeat that we do not want mere form or empty structures. I repeat that the people want an integrated democracy, and I will support the people.

Next comes economic change, or what we call economic liberation. This is a field about which we must speak with total clarity and honesty.

Brothers and sisters, what does economic liberty mean? What is meant by liberating the economy? How? According to what philosophy? I began the transformation toward liberating the Egyptian economy on the first day I was given the people's confidence and was entrusted with the position of highest responsibility. This is not a process which began only yesterday. Had it done so, our situation would indeed be very bad today.

The convening of the first economic conference, which represented various political trends, was the first step that had to be taken to clarify the situation. You remember that. The image that emerged then was dark and bitter. This is a fact: The infrastructure necessary for any industrial or economic activity was in a state of almost total disarray. The factories, as you know, could not operate at full capacity either because their machinery was worn out or because foreign currency was not available to purchase raw materials.

This is another fact: Means of communications and transportation, particularly the railways, were old and obsolete.

The entire country was threatened by epidemics because of deteriorating sewage systems.

You all know all these facts. I do not need to review them.

Therefore, we were confronting the most difficult economic circumstances that any country, urgently needing development and growth, could face. We forged ahead with economic reform with well- planned steps. Our activity did not consist of irreponsible leaps that took the form of propaganda or deluded the masses into believing that nothing better could be achieved. Nor did our activity seek to hide the facts and preach false hopes that are like a mirage which is soon exposed, causing a natural reaction of mistrust and despair among citizens.

Our accumulated debts posed a major obstacle to development, as did restrictions on investment. Meanwhile, the open-door policy had taken a turn toward consumerism and the search for quick profits and had ignored the establishment of a productive base on which progress could be built. On top of everything else, we suffered a scarcity of hard currency.

All this, brothers and sisters, was accompanied by a continuous and alarming increase in population. This increase was gnawing away at the resources we sought to mobilize and utilize to provide the public with the services it needed.

Our population increased by 13 million in 10 years. Had it not been for this increase, we would have found ourselves in a much better position, and we would not have encountered many of the problems we face today. Nevertheless, we will overcome our problems. It may take two or three more years, but we will resolve these problems, God willing.

We were faced with the possibility that the international community would no longer deal with us. I will return to this point later. Our productive abilities were simply insufficient to meet our obligations toward international agencies and institutions.

This was a fearsome, an awesome, situation indeed. Therefore, I concentrated my continous and earnest efforts, in my many trips to world capitals and in my many meetings with officials here in Cairo... [changes thought] Some people used to say: The president has just come back from a trip and is planning to leave on another in two weeks' time. These were not pleasure trips—absolutely not. Some people thought I was traveling to enjoy myself, so I took them along on one of these trips. The next time around they would not come. [laughter] These trips were hard work. We had no time to spare. You can ask those who came along.

I took care to base our affairs with friendly countries and the international financial institutions on a foundation of clear and unambiguous principles. We have adhered to these principles throughout all negotiations. Foremost among these principles is the idea that the economic reform process must be purely Egyptian, for the sole goal of reform is to improve the performance of the Egyptian economy. The reform also aims at increasing production and productivity, expanding exports, reducing imports, and reducing the general budget and balance of payment deficits, so as to bring inflation under control. The reform measures have to consider the special situation of Egypt and its needs. Abstract theories must not be treated as universal laws that must be applied in every time and place, for the circumstances, conditions, and goals differ from one case to another.

In sum, we do not get inspiration from abroad, and we do not submit to pressure or to the dictates of other sides. We only accept what we deem useful to the wide masses of the great people of Egypt. [applause]

Our commitment to these general principles of economic reform resulted in the continuation of our negotiations with the World Bank and the IMF for many years. I will later tell you about this in language everyone can understand, not the dry language of economists.

Our negotiations with the World Bank and the IMF were deadlocked more than once, but in the end we reached a formula that we believe is in line with our main goals for the present and future of this country.

It is fair to say that several friendly states stood by us, supported our course throughout all stages of the negotiations, and made positive contributions to create the climate that made it possible for an agreement to be concluded, despite the wide gap between the proposals submitted to us and what we believed was appropriate in light of our views and our domestic circumstances. I must mention in particular the U.S. Administration, which did not hesitate for a moment in supporting our stand, as well as the friendly European states, especially France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and others. I also mention the fraternal Arab states, which have weight and influence in this direction. They are from us, we are from them, and we shall remain together in all stands. [applause]

Here I address those who spoke irresponsibly about a recipe imposed on us or about conditions to which we surrendered. They did this in order to spread false claims that slandered the national regime, which has not abandoned its stands or principles, regardless of pressure. I tell them: Stop this. Remember Egypt and be honest with yourselves. Remember Egypt, its interests, and its dignity, before spreading falsehoods and lies. Egypt is sovereign. Egypt has social justice. Egypt has a respected position in the international arena. Egypt is not one to receive and obey orders. Egypt resorts to reason, logic, and persuasion. Others fully appreciate its constructive role in the new world order until it achieves a renaissance for its economy and pride for its toiling sons. [applause] These ungrateful ones should see the measures and steps other states in various parts of the world have taken to confront the requirements of economic reform. Later I will mention some events which occurred in large states and in states similar to us. You will then appreciate what your country is doing. These ungrateful ones should understand the extent to which Egypt has defended its interests, adhered to its stand, and insisted that the reform program should be Egyptian in its objectives, orientations, and rhythms and in the manner of its implementation.

From this premise, we announced the 1,000-day program to liberate the Egyptian economy. This program was studied in a fully democratic manner. The People's Assembly, the Consultative Council, and special committees participated with the government in drawing up this program so that it would proceed in a correct and carefully considered way. We still have about three years to complete economic reform. From now on, prices will start to stabilize and production and wages will start to correct themselves. In three or four years, we will achieve economic stability in prices and everything else. We must, however, increase production. We must stop the horrifying increase in population so that the reform process does not exhaust us.

As I announced on an earlier occasion, we are far beyond the stage in which the state undertakes responsibility for production and quality. This is impossible. What government can follow all production? It is impossible to do this. We passed the stage in which the state undertook responsibility for supervising the ability to export and compete. I was visiting a private sector producer. I asked him why he did not export. He said that exporting is a demanding process and that he would rather give his product to the government to export it. I said to him: This is wishful thinking. How can the government export your goods when it is unable to export its own products? This is job of the private sector. It is your money we are talking about and you have to handle it yourself.

This is the responsibility of the entire society, of all individuals, all apparatuses, all institutions, and all organizations, and this is the starting point. It is true that money alone cannot support development. Products able to compete in foreign markets require professional skills which are a positive force in terms of performance, precision, and orderliness. I repeat that to develop investments we must first develop our people. In other words, we must build a man who is capable of making an effective contribution to increasing production which provides new resources. These new resources can generate new investments. By this, we avoid a return to the vicious circle of inflation and overconsumption.

The business which employs human skills must take the initiative and strengthen its relations with the centers of progress so that it can gain experience in foreign markets and thus be able to maintain a permanent presence in those markets. This can be done through continually introducing improvements, achieving perfection, and absorbing the most modern technology which suits our conditions and meets our needs.

The world is heading toward greater freedom of trade. I repeat that the world is heading toward greater freedom of trade, particularly following the remarkable transition in the Soviet Union and East Europe toward a market economy and the end of state control on economic activity. This freedom will necessarily mean keener competition among world producers. It will be a competition in which only the fittest in terms of cost and quality survive. We have to realize this. We have to step up our efforts to meet competitive specifications for our industrial and agricultural products, as well as our tourism and banking services. We have to develop all this. We cannot sit still and wait until something goes wrong. Instead of saying we should have done this or that, we should act. What are you waiting for? We are capable of seeing all obstacles.

The way to gain this competitive edge is to accelerate the building of Egyptian bases—not military bases—to transfer, develop, and augment technology. We have achieved tangible progress in upgrading the quality of many Egyptian products. A new kind of challenge lies ahead, however, and that is to make our products the best on the world market. Everyone is competing. The only way to do this is to invest strenuous and unique efforts in improving, developing, promoting, renewing, and inventing. Let me say frankly and briefly: Yesterday's products will not compete in tomorrow's market. For example, we produce a variety of quality agricultural products. Competition, however, daily is becoming more intensive and development is continuing on improving the quality of the produce, reducing production costs, developing methods of packing, and streamlining harvests. One day I went to Cairo Airport and visited the exports clearance depot. Asked why I wanted to go there, I said let us go and see what they are exporting, what they are doing, and what kind of exports are going out. I saw that some were exporting goods of mediocre quality. Their excuse was that the goods were going to such and such a country. They had placed the goods in cardboard boxes tied up with ropes and belts, and they were using boxes that did not have the exporting company's name. For example the box would say vegetable marrows, but it would contain books. What is this? Who, seeing this, will buy your goods? Packaging is a very important process. The shape of the box and the method of packaging is what encourages people to buy. You travel abroad sometimes and you see something which is also found in Egypt—a can of juice or something like that—but it looks nice and so you go ahead and buy it. In Egypt we may have something better, but it is the the shape of the can that prompts you to buy it. The shape of the can attracts the consumer. We must be aware of this.

Everyone is competing for a larger share of the international markets. It is a process that is becoming more and more complicated.

These rapid international developments make it necessary for us to bring to the fore new institutions specializing in design, invention, and development. We must cooperate to the greatest possible extent with the international institutions that are concerned with modernization and development. We must review the regulations governing incentives and encouragement for inventors in our country. We must give our scientists the opportunity to be present in the factories and fields so that they will introduce all the latest developments there and so that they can make an ever greater contribution in every field of activity.

Another issue is marketing. I was visiting Sinai once, and I wished to stop and look at the hotels. I asked a private sector businessman who owned a hotel how his business was going. He said that business was slack. All right, I knew that; the rate of occupancy was low then. I asked him how many guests he had. He said he had only one. I really felt sorry for him. I asked if anyone was doing publicity for him abroad. He said he was waiting for the governorate authorities to bring in the guests.

If you wait idly for clients to come to you, other hotels will come and steal them from you. You must work actively here in Egypt and make agreements with companies abroad to do publicity for you. Of course they will take a cut from you. The problem is that you do not want to give anyone a percentage of your profit. You want to make money and fill just your own pocket. The result is that you will have no clients, you will not fill your pocket, and you will go bankrupt and have to sell your hotel. This is what is happening. They are acting like the owners of the Nile and sea pleasure boat owners. All of them say a boat makes a profit, so everyone wants to have a boat. They build, build, and build and then wait to market them. From where will the customers come? The world has changed. In the past, when there were only a few hotels and each had some guests, it worked. Now you must deal with a represenative abroad who will take a percentage of your profits but will send you business in return. Then while you are here you will find local and foreign tourists' coming to stay. But we still believe in the idea that God will bring relief. God tells you to work first and then depend on him. He does not tell you to sit down, sleep, and snore and business will come to you. This is not logical. [applause]

Our scientists should be available in factories and farms to introduce every new development. All of these steps are necessary to forge ahead toward the desired economic change. But to move toward our objectives, a healthy climate for investment must be widely and extensively created. The climate required for positive change to liberalize the economy will be achieved by ridding investment of all restrictions and impediments. In other words, the principle which governs our progress and guides our steps is that there should be no restrictions on investment which affect competition. The private sector investments must be treated the same way as the public sector's.

Both sectors are two sides of the same coin, and their funds, both public and private, are invested in Egypt. Both sectors are considered a national investment and are twins of the same entity with no segregation. Ultimately, both sectors aim at achieving the same goals and both depend upon Egypt's youths. They also provide further job opportunities for every honest citizen worthy of the honor of working on this good earth. They give job opportunities for the everincreasing population growth that is straining us.

We provide numerous opportunities for investment without restrictions or requirements in the new cities. We remove all restrictions for anyone who is willing to invest in the new cities. But for investment in other areas we have other thoughts because some people say it is investment, particularly in the Delta. One might say that the land is not cultivable. Is there uncultivable land in the Delta? One would agree with someone and bring papers that a piece of land is fallow. Some sought to invest in the Delta and I refused. They can invest in the new cities. There is no fallow land in the Delta and no one can deceive us on this matter. Anyone who is willing to invest can do so in the new cities. [applause]

We give investors complete freedom in their efforts to attract Egyptian, Arab, or foreign capital to produce productive potential unimpeded by red tape. Another basic factor is the liberalization of management. This can be achieved by eliminating the segregation between the management powers in the public and private sectors and standardizing new rules that can enrich the abilities of management in all types of Egyptian and joint public and private investment.

We have made great strides in securing a climate of freedom and stability in dealing with economic projects. We are now required to move on as quickly as possible to change the management methods in companies and public institutions. Therefore, I requested the government several months ago to initiate comprehensive and substantive amendments in the public sector laws, taking guidance from the experience of countries which achieved distinguished economic performance and the valuable views and recommendations issued by your trade union organizations, the Egyptian General Federation of Labor Unions, and various congresses, [applause] which have met over the past 10 years to generalize the Egyptian experience in running state-owned companies.

I followed with interest the constructive and purposeful dialogue which was held with trade union and public companies' leaders on the guidelines of the new law on public investments. The most important of these guidelines are: To give full freedom to project managers to develop their production, promote their products, and finance investments for the sake of rennovation and improvement; and to replace the unified regulations for public servants by qualitative regulations which agree with working conditions in the various sites. [applause]

All this seeks to increase production and income. I am confident that this new approach, which proved successful in other states, will achieve similar success in Egypt.

There is another fundamental factor. It is to increase investment capital by inviting the private sector to buy shares in some public sector companies—not the largest ones. This is happening already in 20 industrial public-sector companies. Of these I mention Kabo Company—the porcelain company—al-Sharqiyah for cotton products, and others. I want the people to become involved so long as there is an opportunity to increase the capital. You know what I mean by the people. This can be done through offering shares for all to buy.

To make this change of freeing the economy and to actually begin to implement the 1,000-days program, we have to develop legislation to serve the goal of freeing the economy, develop structures which deal with the public sector, and reevaluate the educational institutions which provide the necessary skills for production and development.

We have big companies like al-Mahallah, Kafr al-Dawwar, Stia [spinning and weaving companies], the iron and steel company, the aluminium company, and other big companies. We have to free their management for the sake of more production and more revenues. People say that we are selling. You think that we are liquidating all our assets? [applause] We will not liquidate the country's assets. There are big companies which we should develop instead of obstructing so they can increase production and upgrade their quality. As for those other companies, we can help the ones facing difficulties by offering part of their shares to the public so the capital can be increased and subsequently, we can expand and improve. There is nothing wrong with this approach. The big companies are owned by the people.

We have to reevaluate the educational institutions which provide the necessary skills for improved production. We have already reviewed the laws which govern the economic activity so that they can agree in spirit with the objectives of freeing the economy. This must be accompanied by unifying the various investment laws and ridding the existing legislation of contradictions. The restrictions imposed on the freedom of movement were ones which we imposed on ourselves by our own hands over decades through thousands of laws and complementary regulations. I believe that this comprehensive legislative development should be one of the main tasks for the government in the near future. The groups which will be created in every sector for this purpose must include representatives from the groups which will actually be affected by the new legislation.

We have to present the new draft laws for public discussion. All the new laws which affect large groups of people must be presented for public discussion so that we can hear different views. These views may not be totally sound. But I may find very useful proposals which may help improvement and serve the people in the future. These draft laws must receive proper evaluation and discussion.

I am confident Egypt's scientists and thinkers, its labor and business organizations will contribute with the utmost positiveness and devotion to carry out this difficult and vital task, bringing a real change in the coming stage.

We have passed the stage when the government ran economic activity. For this reason we must adopt a new, enlightened, and liberal view of the role of government departments in dealing with the business sector, such as the departments in charge of exports, imports, licenses, taxes, and customs duties, in addition to government supervisory organs. The laws governing the action of these departments must be amended so that the departments will turn into organs whose actions and measures are not different from those of the business sector. They must learn to appreciate the value of time, help economic development rather than hinder it, and protect society's rights without encroaching on the rights of those who deal with society.

The results of these studies will be translated into proposals and programs which will be implemented in all ministries. The ministers, each in his field, will be responsible for safeguarding and implementing these proposals and programs.

Brothers and sisters, this major effort we are making aims to enable us to build a proper economic structure that will increase revenues by increasing production, that will create new jobs to combat unemployment, that will ensure we enjoy the confidence of international organizations which deal with us, and help in erecting the desired structure.

Every country in the world, including the United States, is currently evaluating the performance of its institutions in order to bolster its capabilities and correct its course.

The most dangerous obstacle in our way is the frightening annual population increase. Production is not keeping up with it. It is swallowing up every new effort and every new source of revenue we can obtain. The inevitable result of the current rate of population increase will bring our population to approximately 70 million in the next 10 years. We will continue running until we lose our breath.

We must take these statistics very seriously. We must be fully conscious of their danger to Egypt's future and its standing in the world.

One of us might say let us cultivate our entire desert area. Okay, but where will we get the water? You sit beside the High [Aswan] Dam and see the water level rising. Be careful, it is not a question of the water level rising. All of us are looking for water and we rejoice when its level rises. Our share of the water will not be able to irrigate more than 2 million feddans until the year 2000. Now you will say let us use underground water. This water is part of the Nile's water. Using more than this will cause a problem. For this reason, I say that if we are not careful and work on the problem of family planning, the population increase will kill us. I repeat again and again that this problem is the greatest problem which hinders the process of development and progress. It casts a dark shadow on life all over the country, adversely affects the standard of living of millions of Egyptian families, exhausts public facilities, restricts the ability of the state and its institutions to raise the standard of their services, and causes a budget deficit year after year, triggering further inflation, increasing the pressure to borrow from abroad, and causing an uncontrollable and terrible increase in prices.

Additionally, a large number of children does not allow fathers and mothers to sufficiently bring up their offspring and teach them proper values.

In view of all this, it is the duty of every Egyptian to play his role in confronting this difficult problem and in finding drastic solutions for protecting the interest of the individual and society and safeguarding the strength of the homeland and the citizen. We must also reconsider our way of life and expenditures. We must learn to live at a standard permitted by our strength and resources. We must control our consumption and confine it to essential commodities and services.

Someone with an income of 400 pounds should not have 14 children. How can he support them? He cannot find a home for them. Commodities are expensive. If his income is not enough, his children will become sick, beggars, street thugs, and ignorant. If we want to bring up a new generation, we must not look after our own comfort. If a weak generation comes, our country will collapse. We must look forward. They are our sons. If we do not bring them up properly, they will curse us after we die. We will not live forever. They will always curse us. They will hold us responsible.

You are aware that I always care for the problems of the groups with limited income in Egypt. I feel their worry and suffering day and night. I do not want them to suffer more hardships as a result of economic reform. However, necessity has its obligations and justifications. Therefore, I am anxious that the suffering of these groups remains at a minimum. I am trying various means to ease their burdens whenever possible. This is because the honest Egyptian citizen, who toils for his daily living and toils to support his family, deserves the state's care and attention. We must always feel his suffering and pain and we must help him as much as possible to achieve his legitimate hope for a better life. [applause]

In view of these considerations, it has been decided to establish a social fund with external financing unrestricted by the state's general budget. The mission of this fund is to give regular aid to those with limited income and to give soft loans to university graduates to help them set up small projects, in addition to financing training programs for thousands of youths to increase their job opportunities at home and abroad. The fund will begin its activity in the coming weeks. We hope to provide it with approximately 1.3 billion pounds before the end of 1991 and that it will start its work without bureaucratic restrictions and obstacles.

On the other hand, we never hesitated to raise wages and salaries whenever that was possible... [interrupted by applause] Wait until I finish may sentence. Perhaps you will not applaud. [Mubarak chuckles] ...whenever that was possible in light of budget considerations and without interfering with the goal of reducing the budget deficit. You know that we have a large deficit. As long as that continues the prices will shoot up, and no one will be able to control them. It is possible to increase wages only if production and productivity are increased and unnecessary expenditure is reduced.

A requisite of economic reform is to find an acceptable solution to the problem of Egyptian debts, which has weighed heavily on us throughout the past 10 years. These Egyptian debts... [changes thought] I used to hear really funny things. Some said that because of the Gulf war they [not further specified] gave us 1, 2, or 3 billion [currency not specified]. Some fellow once asked: Is not the president going to give us some of that money? What is that supposed to mean? [laughter, Mubarak chuckles] Let us be serious. Let us face the facts.

Tourism has been affected. We used to get 2 billion [currency not specified] in revenue from tourism and use that money to buy wheat, sugar, table oil, and other items. The wheat alone costs the state budget approximately $1.2 billion. Sugar costs approximately $0.3 billion. Table oil also costs approximately $0.3 billion. Naturally I could not give you [in wages] the funds that Egypt received. This would have made everyone happy for only a while, but then the funds would be spent and the problems would stay the same.

We have to calculate every move. Tourism was hit. The workers remittances were hit. That is quite a loss. So when our debts were forgiven, praise be to God.... [changes thought] The cancellation of debts was a very hard process. To tell you frankly, I did not imagine that the military debts to the United States would be canceled, for I have been trying to have them canceled since 1982-83 to no avail. We were lucky.

Wise guys say: Now we have money. But they forget that we were unable to pay off these debts to start with. The amount of canceled debts is $7.6 billion. These are debts we were supposed to pay. That amount could have risen to $23 or $24 billion if we were to reschedule the debts for repayment by the coming generation. Would this be in the interest of your children? The next generation is our own children, and we should not impose extra obligations on them. We should be satisfied to provide them with a decent future.

There was a time when the government was trying to raise $100 million to pay the monthly installment of the military debt, because we were behind in our debt payments and, according to U.S. laws, if we are one year behind in our debt payments all the U.S. military and economic aid will be halted. That is a U.S. law. Thank God, we got lucky. I was sitting one day and I read an article by someone saying: We should cancel Egypt's debts. That gave me the idea. I made some contacts and was surprised to learn that they would discuss this topic in their congress. They were to have elections on 4 November, by which time they might reject the idea. So, I made further contacts with a number of people in their parliament, and thank God these efforts bore fruit.

We needed between $90 and $100 million every month to service our debts and we had no agreement with the IMF. I will return to that topic later. When you have no agreement with the IMF and you are behind in your debt payments, no country will be ready to give you loans or credits. If you want wheat, you have to pay in cash. How can I raise all this cash? How can I get 500 or 600 million [currency not specified] for wheat, 100 million for sugar, 100 million for oil, besides other factory requirements? No one was ready to lend to us.

With God's grace the situation eased, things went on, and we did not have to pay the 100 million [currency not specified] we were supposed to pay. This does not mean that we had a surplus, because I was already unable to pay. I owed several billion to Arab states, of which I did not pay a penny. I have not been making payments to European states since 1987. I cannot pay because your consumption has grown remarkably, there is a shortage in the available hard currency, oil consumption increased heavily, exports dropped, and oil prices are still very low. We pay 7 billion Egyptian pounds in subsidy for oil. Anyway, God was gracious. I will tell you the story at the end.

One of the major requirements of economic reform was to reach an acceptable solution to the problem of Egypt's debts, which weighed heavily on us during the past decade. When we signed an agreement with the IMF, we agreed to make reforms, and we are complying with this. Praise be to God because if we had not proceeded with reform, our condition would have been like that of states in a similar position. I will tell you about them shortly.

After the reform, the Paris Club, which reschedules debts, will reduce about 50 percent of our debts. Frankly, we have to praise the Almighty for this, because the Paris Club is alleviating our burden so that we can at least breathe and go on living.

The debt problem threatened to bring serious repercussions in the coming decades. Therefore, this problem has been placed at the top of the list of priorities since I took responsibility. It was this problem that prompted me to give instructions to ministries and different official institutions. I said there would be no borrowing. I was visiting a governorate. An ambassador of a certain state, for example, visits a governorate and tells the governor that he could lend the governorate 100 million [currency not specified]. Why not? It is the government and not the governor who will repay the debt. He borrows 100 million, develops a project, and squanders money here and there; when it it time to pay the debt, the government falls in the trap, fails to pay, and is forced to go to debt clubs. I said no. Whoever wants to borrow 100 million must be able to pay it back. Any governorate that borrows should take responsibility for paying it back in the same currency it borrowed. I said that to officials in a certain governorate. They changed their minds, and used local resources for the project. The governorate does not want to repay. They find something free of charge. They do not care because they do not repay. The governor wants to make the governorate look fancy and let the country collapse. If the country collapses, I will not be able to provide you with your needs. Do I let you carry out a project which fails?

Therefore, I say there will be no borrowing and will endorse no borrowing. Any borrowing should be approved by a decree. I endorse borrowing only when I see it is essential. I gave instructions to the central bank and the government that borrowing must have a maximum limit after the debts are reduced. It is the limit I can repay. If the borrowing approaches that red line, the government must be notified so that we can turn down the request. Let us eat dust until things improve, so that we can avert a catastrophe.

I raised the issue with many creditor countries' leaders to find a way out of this problem which threatened to paralyze our ability to march ahead with reform and development. The strenuous efforts we began in spring in 1983 to alleviate the debt burden have finally borne fruit. The credit for taking the first step in that direction goes to the American President, who took all the necessary steps to relieve Egypt of its military debts, which reached $6.7 billion. Moreover, he contacted the leaders of other creditor states and urge them to take similar steps. [applause] Do not applaud, or a party newspaper will criticize you for applauding America. What is the difference between America and England? Whoever helps me is worthy of my esteem. [applause]

The U.S. President's request was received by an obvious responsiveness on the part of several friendly states, primarily French President Francois Mitterrand, who telephoned me to tell me that our debt would be reduced by 50 percent. [applause] In the next few days, perhaps by the end of May, we expect that all necessary measures will be taken to tangibly reduce our debts. I am telling you frankly that we would not have dreamed of this, if it were not for Egypt's significance. They would have ignored us if we failed to repay the debts. This happened to neighboring states. They would not care, even if you have to eat the dust, because you are valueless. Your value lies in your decisions, troops, resources, and your ability to use influence. This is the real value. [applause]

Signing the agreement with the IMF opened the door for this step, which will certainly reflect positively on Egypt's economy.

Brothers and sisters, the Middle East is living in difficult times. It is passing through a delicate stage in its history following the devastating upheaval caused by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The primary features of this stage are an increased need to enhance individual and collective security and an increase in the dangers people believe threaten their safety and stability. In resolving this, we are not restricted to any particular framework or cling to one form to the exclusion of another. Rather, we are indeed willing to look into any proposal to achieve this objective of security as long as it is in line with our principles and policy and conducive to strengthening pan-Arab security in its broad sense, which exceeds the mere military aspect to include political, economic, and cultural aspects, as well as the social fabric of the entire Arab homeland.

When we look at the situation of the Arab family today, the first thing we notice is that as much as we were pained by the catastrophe the Iraqi invasion inflicted on Kuwait and the hardship it imposed on its people, we also feel sorrow and pain at the disasters which have befallen the Iraqi people. This was represented by the loss of hundreds of thousands of its sons, the destruction of its possessions and basic facilities, the squandering of its wealth and energies—and meanwhile they are celebrating the president's birthday and having a cake and things like that. [laughter] By God, I do not know what this means. Perhaps they have their own traditions and habits. This does not concern us—in a way that does not benefit any of its sons. In addition, epidemics, disorder, and suppression have spread in many parts of the country as a result of the reckless acts of a leadership that gambled with the people's destiny in this fraternal country and in neighboring countries and that disregarded the damage caused to current and future vital pan- Arab interests. Do you know that before the aerial battle, I sent him a special appeal? I said to him, beware, announce that you will withdraw your forces from Kuwait. He responded with invective. Before the ground war, I said to him, accept the U.S. conditions. He said to me, you are lightheaded. Do you know that if he had accepted the first or second appeals, he would have placed the coalition countries and the rest of the world in a very difficult position. He would have withdrawn his total forces, undamaged in any way, [word indistinct] the aerial war, he would have been able to stand up and cause them problems. If he had done this before the ground war, he would have saved his Army and people. But love of power, even over people's dead bodies, is what caused all the destruction.

What is happening now? They tell him: get out of Zakho. Yes, all right. Enter Zakho. Yes, all right. [laughter] Get out of Safwan. Yes, all right. Go back. Why all of this? [applause] He could have preserved his dignity. To speak frankly, one is sad about what happened. This is a fraternal Arab country. I never wanted this to happen. I addressed about 32 appeals to him, including clear, written messages, in which I warned him of the dangers and described to him the scenario that later occurred. I said to him this and that will happen. It was not that I knew in advance, but because I have experience in these matters. I told him this and that will happen. You will be subjected to aerial strikes; they will destroy your equipment; they will achieve air superiority, and then they will have complete control of the air and fly as they want; and in the end they will attack you on the ground. A newspaper in our country proclaimed victory on the day the ground attack was completed. What victory? Are we laughing at ourselves? And then what? It was said that he deceived them and withdrew his Army. What army? Was there any longer an army to withdraw? The Army had left the trenches, was exposed, subjected to strikes, and completely destroyed. He is deceiving the simple people. Okay.

It is important for us to reiterate on this occasion that, while we support the Iraqi people regaining their basic liberties and political rights, and everything it entails, we wish to emphasize our rejection of any overt or covert attempts to partition and dismember the Iraqi state. [applause] If this happens, it will greatly harm all of Iraq and inflict damage on it, the extent of which no one can foresee and which cannot possibly benefit any of its sons. Hence, we urge all factions of the Iraqi people, regardless of their affiliation and identity, to view the issue from a more profound perspective that considers the supreme national and pan-Arab interests in the short- and long-term. It should seek, with total determination and sincere patriotic feeling, to suppress secessionist tendencies and transform them into a constructive energy to be used for reconstructing Iraq and alleviating the hardship that seeems to be its people's destiny.

If we move now to the Arab scene as a whole, we will find it incumbent on all of the forces who are genuinely concerned about the future of this nation to make every possible effort to achieve a prompt solution to the Palestinian issue, a solution that would allow the brotherly Palestinian people to exercise their legitimate national rights, chief of which is their right of free choice and self-determination. Such a solution should open the way for a comprehensive conciliation between the Arab countries and Israel, a necessary condition in achieving security and stability in the region.

Therefore, we seek to provide suitable circumstances for the start of comprehensive peace negotiations in the framework of a peace conference and for active participation by the concerned international powers. Such participation is neither an obstacle nor a substitute to direct negotiations between the two parties of the conflict, but it will help to surmount the existing difficulties, narrow the differences between the opposing points of view, and boost the chances of finding a solution.

Despite the fact that the current efforts to revive the peace process, in which the United States is playing a prominent role, have run into some obstacles and difficulties, we believe that we all have a duty to exploit the golden opportunity that materialized after the Gulf war to end this complicated problem and usher in a new era in this region, one in which the specter of war would vanish and the symptoms of violence and tension would disappear.

Every side is required to contribute to providing the necessary requisites to begin the peace negotiations and surmount the existing obstacles. Israel should also meet its responsibilities in this regard. Israel should undertake to halt all settlement activities in the occupied territories, for these activities are capable of undermining the entire peace process and snuffing out hope for finding an acceptable formula for coexistence and cooperation, at a time when we have a definite need for confidence-building measures on both sides of the borders.

At the international level, Egypt is playing an active and positive role and is contributing to the establishment of the new international order, consolidation of the concept of legitimacy in international dealings, and the creation of new channels for cooperation between the north and south parallel to the progress achieved in relations between the East and West. We welcome and support this development because it will inevitably benefit overall international relations.

Let us talk about the IMF and explain the issue simply. I am not explaining this issue to specialists but to the vast majority of citizens. What is the IMF? We wrangle with it but eventually we resort to it. Those who lived in the countryside remember how in the past an employee—even an employee with limited income who was not well off—an employee in the countryside with one or two sons had a rather comfortable life. But when he had three, four, five, or six sons, his salary was insufficient. He would then begin buying from a grocer on credit. He would buy potatoes and every other item, as a grocer in the countryside usually sold everything. An employee would even buy bread if he did not bake his bread at home. An employee with 20 or 30 pounds a month in those days would find that he owed the grocer 20 pounds at the end of the month. He would pay 15 and keep five to buy clothes for his children's uniforms or other things. He would have only five pounds left. Next month, he would not be able to pay off 15 pounds and would pay only 10 pounds. In the third month, he would pay nothing and would continue to buy everthing, even packs of cigarettes. When a grocer would ask a son of the employee to tell his father to pay just five pounds of the debt, the employee would say that he would pay when he received his salary or when God would help. Then months would pass and he would pay nothing. When an employee sent his son to buy something, the grocer would ask him to tell his father that he had nothing to sell. Thus, he would resort to borrowing and burden his life. Why should one not control his affairs? [laughter in the background]

Let us discuss our situation. We have not paid our installments for three years—we have not paid the grocer. [laughter] But those with whom we deal do not understand this. [laughter] They want us to pay. They ask us if we are not going to pay. The first year they would say all right, but next year and the next we cannot pay. Why not? Because our population growth and consumption are increasing while hard currency is decreasing. We are consuming oil at an enormous rate, and our oil exports are less. Our hard currency income from oil in 1981 totaled $3.5 billion, whereas our income this year totaled only $1.5 billion. Tourism has dwindled, and we are not getting any revenues from it. We are not getting funds from our expatriates returning home. As for exports, we are barely getting by. We need to export much more, and our exports do not keep up with the population growth. We are unable to pay for food imports. You want wheat. We pay approximately 1.2 billion [currency not specified] annually for wheat. We pay 300 million for sugar imports and approximately 300 million for oil. We import items for our factories; otherwise they will stand still, and our production will cease. This would be catastrophic. We have not paid our installments for three years. What can we do? Foreign countries would not pay us unless they are sure our economy is sound and we can pay off our debts. Who is entitled to say that our economy is sound and that we are proceeding to reform it? It is the IMF. We are wrangling with it and arguing about why it is not giving us funds. The IMF can only certify that our economy is proceeding on a sound basis and that we are making sound reforms. Thus, other countries might be encouraged and give funds or facilities. Foreign countries have funds and want to invest them. We need credit facilities to import wheat instead of paying cash. Where can I find 400 million for an installment, or 100 million for sugar, and so on and so forth? I need some 700 million a month, but where can I find it? We receive our income throughout the year. The Suez Canal Authority brings 1.3 or 1.4 billion yearly. The ships that transit the Suez Canal during a year do not transit in one day. They do not pay on the same day or in advance.

We receive our income throughout the year. When we are unable pay our debts, the creditors ask us to reach an agreement with the IMF to make sure our economy can be reformed and we can pay off the debts. We have been haggling with many countries for three years. Had it not been for our excellent relations with the East and West, North, and South, we would not have been able to live the way we did for the past three years. A loaf of bread would have been difficult to get. Some say that we can sow wheat in Egypt, but how much can we sow? There is no longer enough wheat, rice, or vegetables in Egypt. A ton of rice used to sell for the price of two or three tons of wheat. It is not a matter of just talk. No.

We have reached agreement with the IMF. The economic reforms will force us to bear some burdens—let us not deceive ourselves about this. But I will try to reduce the burdens on the low-income people as much as I can. But those who spend much will have to bear more burdens. After two or at most three years, the process will balance and the prices will stabilize. But we must bear this situation. Despite this, when I have to do something in this regard, I will be as careful as possible to increase salaries to cope with the increases [in prices] to help the people with low income—the government and public sector employees. [applause]

Why are we in a much better position than others? I will explain to you the economic reforms in a country like ours and what happened in it so that you may thank God for his help. We increase this or that item one shilling or 10 piastres and so on and so forth. Some complain about sales tax. This is nothing. We must reform our economy in order to secure funds; otherwise, no one will pay us anything and we will starve. Those who visited countries such as the Soviet Union and the socialist countriesm with me—are any of them here? They went into shops. Did they see anything? The shops were empty. There was no food. The people had money but there was no food in the markets to buy. I visited Moscow long ago and everything was available, but subsidized. It is subsidies that caused us all these problems.

I will tell you about prices. The Soviet Union had nothing to do with the IMF, the World Bank, the Kuwaiti Fund, the Arab, or French Funds. I will tell you what the Soviet Union did. It was essential for the Soviet Union to reform its economy because it could no longer afford to continue on the same course. You are aware of the current upheavals in the Soviet Union. The cause of their turmoil is economic. In the Soviet Union the price of bread on 1 April 1991 was raised 280 percent, nearly threefold. There was no other solution. Either they accepted this or they would have no bread. This is the problem. The price of flour increased by 260 percent. The price of cooking oil increased by three and half times. The price of sugar increased by two and half times. The price of white low-fat cheese, which is not nourishing—you would become weak if you ate it—increased six times. The price of tea increased four times. The price of macaroni increased three times, and the price of potatos, a popular staple, increased seven and half times. I am telling you this so that you can appreciate our situation. We must thank God for our situation. I am telling you this for your information and not that we are going to do the same. No. What we are doing is nothing.

The price of meat increased by three and half times. The price of meat, say, was one pound on 30 March and suddenly became three and half pounds the next morning, on 1 April. In other words, a commodity worth one pound increased by six times and others by seven times. The price of meat increased by three and half times. The price of eggs increased by two and half times, and the price of milk increased twofold. The price of mass produced utility shirt increased by three and half times, the price of trousers increased by four times, and the price of suits increased by five times.

I am not telling you these figures just for the sake of announcing them. The Soviet Union is listening to the figures, and if we are lying they will say so. We got the figures from official sources. Men's shoes increased sevenfold. That pair of shoes, say, was 10 pounds on 30 March and suddenly became 70 pounds on 1 April. Even at such prices these commodities are not available. There is no cheese, shoes, or shirts. Ladies' shoes increased by six and half times, and children's shoes by five and half times.

Public transportation fares increased threefold, the price of train tickets increased threefold, and domestic airline flights increased by twofold. This is an example of countries not related to IMF. It is not an IMF package prescription, as they say. Those who say prescription are contradicting themselves because they know well that it is not only Egypt who joined the IMF. I will tell you how many countries joined the IMF so that you will know. They include the United States, Britain, as well as many others.

I am giving you this information about the prices so that you realize the difference between what we are doing and what is taking place in the other countries.

Let's talk about currency. The exchange rate of one dollar in Egypt is between 3.3 and 3.4 pounds, and the price fluctuates according to market demand. But if we use Poland as an example, the dollar used to be exchanged at 175 zlotys. Now it is traded at 9,500 zlotys. In Turkey, the dollar used to be traded at 675 Turkish lira. The current price of one dollar is 3,135 lira. In Yugoslavia, the dollar was traded at 38 dinars, but now it is exchanged at 13,000 dinars. When we were in Belgrade they thought they could buy the country with one dollar, but they could not buy even a notebook.

In Peru, the dollar used to be exchanged at 1.4 intis. Now it is 550,000; that is half a million. [as heard] They have absolutely no production. In Nigeria, the dollar was 3.3 naira and is now 8.8 naira. There are other examples. But I wanted to give you an idea about our condition and that of others. Praise be to our Lord. All these are Third World countries.

Let's talk about prices in Poland. They increased the prices from January 1990 until now. The price of bread is 32 times greater than in January 1990. During the year, the price of bread increased 65 times, I repeat 65 times. Can you imagine what would happen if the price of one loaf of bread in Egypt was 5 piasters on a certain day and suddenly the price was more than 3 pounds the next morning? You would all faint. [laughter] This is only an example. You may say that they have money. But I will tell you how much the prices have gone up. The price of flour is 17 times greater and remains the same. The price of cooking oil has increased 39 times in early 1990, and has increased 109 times since then.

These are not figures that we made up for you—they are facts. A kg of cooking oil that used to sell for, say one pound, sells for 109 today. The price of sugar increased 36 times last year, and is now 40 times greater. You still buy the kg under the rationing system for 10 piasters. [cheers] No, wait a minute. I will tell you now. Under the rationing system, you buy three quarters of a kg for 10 piasters and three quarters of a kg for 50 piasters, but you do not ask about it. Thus, at an average price of 30 piasters per kg, you buy one and a half kg for 45 piasters. This is how it works, so do not try to outsmart me. [laughs] Does a kg of sugar cost 10 piasters anywhere else in the world? If you gave someone 10 piasters he would throw it back at you. So the first kg costs 10 piasters and the second 50. But the one and a half kg you are entitled to costs you 45 piasters. Last year you tried to outsmart me and told me the same thing and I argued against it. [cheers and applause]

Again in that country, tea increased by 16 times last year. Now it is 24 times as much. Macaroni increased 40 times last year. Now it costs 82 times more. You think this is fiction, but these are accurate figures. Potatoes, the popular food, increased from 14 to 45 times last year to 59 times today. Meat increased by 76 times last year. This year, it is 116 times as much. Eggs increased 15 times, milk 21 times. Shirts, an important item for the people, are 35 times as much. Men's suits increased by 75 times and men's shoes increased 13 times. Public bus fares increased by 28 times in one year. The fares for express buses increased by 47 times. Telephone call charges increased by 23 times. In return, salaries were increased six times, that is 20 percent. [as heard] The average increase in all commodities is approximately 40 fold, but the salaries were increased by only sixfold. [audience comments] You say that they do not eat? Well, they eat as much as they can afford. What can they do?

They wake up in the morning to find that the price of gasoline quadrupled. When it was increased here in January 1977 there was an uproar. Things cannot work this way. But I am telling you now that our economic reform will go at an easy pace, and I will try to raise [the salaries] of the citizens. The figures will absolutely not reach these astronomical figures, absolutely not. [cheers] We are all in the same boat, not just you. I will try to get the government to examine the matter. If I decide on a price increase this month, I will give you a raise as of 1 June. [applause] I will not wait for the budget.

I will tell you about the countries that introduced economic reforms in answer to those who talk about a package dictated to Egypt. Our package is one of the best, because it springs from us. We have been discussing it for three years. No country had talks for three years. Were it not for the political circumstances, we would not have been able to reach what we reached.

Some Arab states—I do not want to name them lest they get angry—concluded 12 agreements with the IMF, some concluded seven agreements, and others also concluded a number of agreements—I do not want to explain for they may get very angry. As for the Asian states, the PRC concluded two agreements with the IMF; Pakistan concluded eight agreements; South Korea concluded 16 agreements until it got to where it is now; and the Philippines concluded 18 agreements. As for the nonaligned countries, India concluded four agreements with the IMF; Indonesia concluded eight agreements; Yugoslavia concluded 12 agreements; Nigeria concluded two agreements; the Ivory Coast concluded five agreements; and Brazil concluded 11 or 13 agreements.

This is not an IMF prescription. People should not exaggerate horrid things about their country. You are aware of what is burdening us. Take any country. The problem lies with the government employees. The country pays a lot in wages. Do you know how much government employees are paid? We pay 7.14 billion pounds in wages. This is in addition to the incentives. How many state employees do we have? The state has the largest number of employees—more than 4 million—in proportion to the Egyptian population. Turkey has approximately 1.3 million employees and is reducing that number. The more we increase the number of employees, the more we print banknotes, the more prices go up. Then we will not be able to manage at all.

[Audience member says: May God help you.] Besides asking God to help me, you must help me. After you implore God to help me, what am I supposed to do? Work on my own? This will not do.

By God, you should be aware that the price increases in states like ours are monstrous. But we have endured. For three years we have been laboring hard to get to the reforms we achieved. After the three-year reforms, party newspapers began clamoring: The prices have increased, and the people have limited incomes. We are more worried than you are about those with limited incomes. If the person who is clamoring can do any better, I will applaud him and make a statue for him.

Brothers and sisters: This is my statement to the people. It presents the facts and the way to solutions. The facts confirm that we are really confronting a new phase in the upsurge to reconstruction. This requires a new spirit and a conscious change for the better in our social and political structure that should accompany the liberalization of the economy, the increase of production, and the securing of labor. Solutions simply begin within ourselves, from the depths of the patient and vigilant Egyptian human being—the Egyptian human being who, throughout the ages, has always been able to discriminate between the deceptive slogan and the sincere objective; the Egyptian human being whom God has favored with a natural intelligence and an extraordinary ability to comprehend. The Egyptian's ingenuities manifested themselves throughout history, since the first glowing human civilization ever recorded emerged. His ingenuity is now manifested in various scientific activities and in the largest capitals of the advanced countries. Time has come for him to direct all of his talents and power to change his society, develop his democratic practices, and bolster his economic structure so that the present generation can proceed with firm steps and so that we can provide security, prosperity, and stability for the coming generations.

Let us completely drop from our lives the sense of individualism, whose growth was encouraged by several cricumstances which the countries passed through in the second half of this century, or the sense that the government is responsible for everything. There is no shame in admitting to ourselves that the experiences we had gone through throughout the 20th century resulted in negative effects, which had an influence on individual conduct and, consequently, on collective conduct. This lasted until the time of the peaceful turn for democracy, which opened the closed doors and removed many of the veils that kept out the lights.

But the process of rebuilding in the lives of the peoples does not occur overnight and it is not achieved by a certain faction of the people to the exclusion of others. Rather, it requires a rational national approach with well-defined objectives and a comprehensive program. It also necessitates firm cohesiveness and close solidarity among all the political and social factions to work hand-in-hand toward achieving the goals endorsed unanimously by the nation. We want to erase from the dictionary of our lives the sinful call that urges the people to say: After me, the deluge. Instead, let our call be, out of conviction: I am an indivisible and inseparable part of the community in which I live. Should our society become infested with evil, it will not spare those who have isolated themselves from society and indulged in fulfilling their selfish interests.

Egypt is in urgent need of collective changes in each position, be it small or large, in all political and other activities, and in all fields of production and services.

Let us all be guards for this change and shield it from any disruption or setback. I say we are at a crossroads. The road for hope and work is bright and illuminated by all the resources in our possession, in terms of heritage, culture, and awareness, and by all the resources we try to discover with hard work, genuine efforts, and firm and unified will, raising one flag; that is, the flag of a strong and propsperous Egypt.

Brothers and sisters: Change is not achieved by a decision from a ruler. Change occurs by the decision of the people, which is the decisionmaker, and there is plenty of room here for competition. All the intellectual powers capable of commanding a change in our conduct is urged by Egypt, the present and the future, to work hard. All the working forces, chief among them the workers of Egypt, can be creative, make up for the past, and enhance our national wealth. We have seen successful leaders in various fields of work who managed to make tangible change in their fields of activity by continuous dedication and endeavors. I see no reason why this rule should not be standardized in all the executive and service fields. There is ample room for contributions from each citizen who can do so, and we have all the requirements that could create an atmosphere favorable for a positive change.

We have a free press capable of carrying truthful reports, sound opinions, and objective research and of protecting society from the evil and harmful calls and tendencies. We have a multiparty system, a People's Assembly and a Consultative Council chosen through free elections, trade unions, and various other popular gatherings, which are all patriotic Egyptian institutions that could lead the society forward.

But the change must first begin with a healthy political democratic practice that avoids whimsical trends, is committed to national goals, and seeks to perform its duty, not to assume power without objectives. We are not in a race of words. Rather, we are bound in a unified common struggle. The word could be so noble when it guides us to the right path. The struggle for developing life could be so magnificent when it represents an honest translation of a noble objective.

We will not begin in a vacuum. Rather, we are complementing, promoting, and illuminating the road's marks. Our road can absorb all classes. Our road can embrace those most competent, most honest, and those with affiliations. Our road supports the low-income people until they can stand on their feet. Our road gives incentive to those able to achieve more legal gains while not forgetting the call for joint responsibility, compassion, and affiliation. Happiness should not be acquired at the expense of others' suffering. Hearts will not beat if they are void of social ethics that can help those who suffer and instill hope in the hearts of millions.

This is what our pure religion teaches us, and this is what the message of religion urges. The spiritual call is an appeal for a real change for the better. We are all Egyptians, and we are all faithful. The faith is the spring of noble patriotism on the blessed soil of Egypt. With faith and work, all hands and minds will cooperate to build a new life at this new phase. Our road is not always planted with roses. The new building needs perseverance and the rule of consultation and social justice greatly contributes to alleviating the burdens of life and overcoming the hard times dictated by the current circumstances. This is embodied in the existing gap between the prices and the level of wages, a gap that should be narrowed when we come closer to reaping the fruit of the all-embracing economic reform.

Our present reform will continue to bridge the gap until we complete the process in about three or four years. We will suffer slightly because we have no other solution. As I told you, any increase in price will not affect bread, sugar, or basic commodities. I must raise wages for the sake of the low-income people. For your information, a 5-percent pay raise would cost us 300 million pounds annually. In other words, 10 percent would mean 600 million pounds. This is only to show you how much we spend. I have promised you. If I increase the prices I will give you a raise. It could be a slight increase, but we must accept them so that we can breathe a sigh of relief after three or four years. We just cannot be a liability to the world and continue to ask people to give us loans. The prices might be slightly high, but this is due to the disorder. However, when we bridge the gap between wages and prices in the economic reform, the prices must be stabilized.

I would double your wages provided the prices do not increase by 20 times. But you know well that if I give you a raise I will have to take something from you. I have no other means. It would be catastrophic for everyone of us if I print money. The price of a commodity worth one pound will jump to 40 pounds.

Brothers and sisters: Our call is honest. It comes from the bottom of our hearts. We implore God Almighty to guide us toward the light, right, and faith. We fear God because we are faithful. God is well-acquainted with what ye do. [Koranic verse] May God's peace and mercy be upon you. [applause]

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Yemeni Envoy

LD0705081191 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2315 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution received brother Yahya Husayn al-'Arashi, the minister of state for cabinet affairs in the fraternal Yemeni Republic and personal envoy of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

The Yemeni envoy delivered to the brother leader a written message from his brother President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih concerning the joint Arab action within the framework of consultation between the two countries.

During the meeting, Brother al-'Arashi praised the effective role shouldered by the brother leader of the revolution in realizing the unity between the two parts of Yemen. He said that the Arab people in Yemen highly appreciate the great effort made by the brother leader for Yemeni unity, which underlined the brother leader's call for the need to establish Arab unity.

Brother al-'Arashi during the meeting, which was attended by the secretary of the General People's Committee for External Liaison and International Cooperation and the Yemeni Republic ambassador to the Great Jamahiriyah, presented the brother leader with a gift consisting of a file containing the documents of the unity between the two parts of Yemen; the first of which is the charter of Sanaa-Aden concerning the unification of the two parts of Yemen and which was signed in Tripoli on 26 al-Harth [November] 1972 under the auspices of the brother leader of the revolution.

Al-Qadhdafi Receives Yemeni Delegation

LD0505104791 Tripoli JANA in English 0810 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Tripoli, May 5, JANA—The leader of the revolution yesterday received the delegation of the sisterly republic of Yemen who are attending at present the meetings of the People's Congresses in their 2nd session held currently throughout the municipalities of Great Jamahiriyah.

The delegation consists of the Nasserit Popular Correction Organisation, the Unionist Popular Nasserit Group and the Yemeni Reform Group.

Libyan Arab Committee for Human Rights Formed

LD0505174691 Tripoli JANA in English 1419 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Tripoli, al-Ma' [May] 5, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Mohammed 'Ali al-Jadi, the president of the Supreme Court and president of the Libyan Arab Committee for Human Rights, asserted that the leader of the revolution's abolition of prisons and tearing up of the lists of those banned from travel was a historic act which we will always be proud of before the whole world for it represented the climax of granting of freedom to the citizen and represented the glorious objectives since the advent of the great al-Fatih revolution, spearheaded by the universal revolutionary leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi who made the freedom and dignity of the individual as his first goal since the coming of the glorious revolution.

In an interview with JANA yesterday, he pointed out that the committee will work for the assertion and entrenchment of the glorious objectives contained in the greater green charter of human rights in the epoch of the masses' rule which afirmed the humanitarian dimension of the great al-Fatih revolution and its constant eagerness for the protection of freedom and dignity of mankind everywhere.

The president of the Libyan Arab Committee for Human Rights declared "after the leader of the revolution's abolition of prison, tearing up of the lists of those banned from travel, granting total freedom to all members of the society and the promulgation of the greater green charter of human rights in the Jamahiri epoch which included important principles relating to fundamental political, economic and social human rights, a number of people interested in human rights including judges, advocates, jurists, university lecturers and others met and declared the setting up of a human rights committee under the name "The Libyan Arab Committee for Human Rights in the Jamahiri Epoch." They set up a constitutive board among themselves which prepared the regulations of the committee, registered it and a law was promulgated regarding it after the number of founders was fulfilled in accordance with law number 1970 relating to associations.

He said that the committee is aimed at the study, consolidation and promotion of the concepts and principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms contained in the greater green charter of human rights in the Jamahiri epoch and all international charters, conventions, covenants and other international declarations on human rights and to propagate, with all means, the principles and concepts of human rights contained in the greater green charter of human rights.

Also, the preparation of scientific research and studies, the publication of periodicals, pamphlets and publications etc. so as to fulfill the objectives set out in its regulations, setting up specialised commissions in every branch of human rights and fundamental freedoms to follow up developments and gather data in each particular branch and to coordinate with natural and legal personalities who advocate human rights in the Jamahiri epoch aimed at showing the Arab viewpoints and combat the Zionist and hostile propaganda and activities; to register the committee at regional and national similar organisation; to expose violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms everywhere and by all legitimate means and to do whatever possible to put an end to such violations and cooperation with other human rights organisations and institutions; to seek to set up an institute for human rights in the Jamahiri epoch and coordinate with similar institutes.

Regarding the achievements and activities of the committee since its establishment, the president pointed out that despite the short period of it coming into being, taking into consideration the time taken for its registration, approval and publication of its regulations, the committee was able to consolidate relations with some international human rights organisations as it participated in contacting Chad in a bid to see the state of

Libyan prisoners in Ndjamina and that was in collaboration with the International Red Cross committee for the implementation of and respect for the African charter of human rights.

Also the committee condemned the act of piracy by America against the Libyan prisoners in Chad. The committee translated and replied to more than 17,000 letters sent to various sections in great Jamahiriyah regarding questions on persons or subjects. At the local level the committee received letters from individuals and organisations and followed them up with judicial and administrative organs and replied to the senders of those letters in accordance with informations received from the said organs and some of requested were responded to but others are still subject to consideration by them.

Regarding relations of the committee with its counterparts in the Arab world, the president asserted that there are contacts with human rights committees in the Arab Maghreb Union including the Algerian Committee for Human Rights, the Tunisian Association for the Defence of Human Rights, the Moroccan Human Rights Committee and the Mauritanian Committee of Human Rights so as to coordinate with them and that the committee is working for the consolidation of its relations in the field of defending human rights in the Arab Maghreb Union and seek to join the Arab Organisation for Human Rights.

He concluded by deploring the bids of some Western regimes to level accusations against great Jamahiriyah. He said "such accusations are groundless and only spread by those who doubt the ability of Arab human rights organisations to fulfill their tasks.

Committee Notes Growth in Non-Oil Sector

LD0505213191 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] The Great Jamahiriyah in 1990 realized a big growth in national production. Growth increased from 1,288 million dinars in 1970 to 7,816 million dinars in 1990. A report issued by the General People's Committee for Economic Planning stated that the oil industry represented 63.1 percent of this figure in 1970, whereas the contribution of other activities was only 36.9 percent. This [non-oil] figure rose in 1990 to 71.2 percent.

The oil revenue dropped to 28.2 percent. These indicators confirm the growth of the other production sectors outside the oil sector. The report pointed out that the rise in the volume of GNP is because the society in the same period became more productive, which in turn resulted in the rise in the standard of living of the individual and his welfare.

The report also explains that the society's turn to production was on the basis of the revolutionary program and the total mobilization, a program that was approved by the General People's Congress in their second ordinary session in 1989. The General People's Congress implemented it by way of offering the necessary facilities to any citizen and to those working in the various popular production sectors to turn to production on economic bases. Practical experiments confirmed that when citizens turn to production themselves, this production increases and consequently it contributes to the increase in the wealth of society itself.

The detailed program for the operation of transformation to production, which includes 61 production lines, is available to anyone who wishes to turn to production.

Mauritania

Relatives of Missing Prisoners Send Letter

LD2504202191 Paris International Service in French 1230 GMT 25 Apr 91

[Excerpt] In Mauritania it is now 10 days since President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya promised a referendum and democracy before the end of the year. An increasing number of people are taking up positions on the subject, but a problem is resurfacing—that of the black Mauritanians who have been arrested, some of whom have disappeared over the last few months. The mothers and the wives of missing men have just sent an open letter to the head of state. We have details from our correspondent in the region, Thierry Perret:

[Perret] For the first time they are speaking out—they are the mothers, the sisters, the wives, of black Mauritanian prisoners who have never reappeared since their arrest last November and December. There are 110 signatories to this open letter to the head of state, 110 women who are wondering about the fate of those who are missing and who, they say, have come up against a wall of silence. [passage omitted]

Workers Demand Release

AB0105205891 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 1 May 91

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[Text] The Government in Mauritania is facing mounting open opposition that came to something of a climax in Nouakchott today with the May Day march by the Mauritanian Trade Workers Union, which is controlled by the National Democratic Movement. Not only did the marchers carry placards calling for multiparty democracy and critical of the government's economic performance, but perhaps more poignantly, about the fate of black Mauritanians held in detention without trial. From Nouakchott, (Cheih Bakhai) telexed this report.

[Begin recording] The most touching part of march was the appearance of about 20 black Mauritanian women who cried, Our husbands have disappeared; Our brothers have disappeared: where are they? The women were answered with chants from the crowd, demanding an independent commission. The women are the wives and sisters of black Mauritanian military officers who have been imprisoned and allegedly tortured. They were arrested in November and December last year for conspiring to overthrow the government. Their number is estimated at 200, but there are no official figures. Mauritania's head of state, Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya granted a general amnesty for all political prisoners and ordered the formation of a commission of inquiry to investigate prison deaths. The commission is comprised of military officers. The Mauritanian League for Human Rights has been refused membership. Opposition parties, including the Black Mauritanian Liberation Forces, are calling for an independent commission of enquiry.

The opposition has meanwhile rejected the democratization plan announced by Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya on 15 April. The opposition has demanded Colonel Ould Taya's resignation, the convening of a national confernce, and the readmission of black Mauritanians who were repatriated to Senegal. [end recording]

Yemeni Foreign Minister Arrives in Nouakchott

LD0105224891 Nouakchott Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 1 May 91

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, the Yemeni minister of state for foreign affairs, arrived in the country this afternoon. He was greeted on arrival by Hasni Ould Didi, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation, and by His Excellency Abd al-Hasan Muhammad Muhran, the Yemeni ambassador in Nouakchott.

In a statement to the MAURITAIAN PRESS AGENCY the Yemeni minister pointed out his happiness over this, his first visit to his second country, Mauritania. He said he is carrying a message dealing with bilateral relations from the Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to his brother and his friend His Excellency Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, chairman of the Military Committee for National Salvation and head of state. Dr. al-Dali added that he will also be holding talks with the Mauritanian foreign minister, in particular on bilateral cooperation between the two countries and on ways to cleanse the Arab atmosphere.

Morocco

Yemeni Official Brings Presidential Message

LD0405134391 Rabat MAP in English 1244 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] Rabat, May 4th (MAP)—Foreign Affairs Secretary of State of Yemen 'Abd-al-Aziz al-Dali arrived here Friday [3 May] bearing a message from President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to King Hassan II of Morocco. Al-Dali told the press the message he is to deliver deals with bilateral relations and latest developments on the Arab scene. His visit, he went on, is part of regular consultation between the two countries which enjoy excellent friendship ties.

Morocco, Algeria, Spain Sign Pipeline Deal

LD0105141691 Rabat MAP in English 1302 GMT 1 May 91

[Text] Madrid, May 1 (MAP)—Algeria, Spain and Morocco signed here Tuesday an accord on the completion of the compilation of economic aspects relating to the construction of the Maghreb-Europe gas pipeline due to convey Algerian gas to Western Europe and Morocco via Moroccan and Spanish territories.

The gas pipeline to be operational as of the mid of 1995 will in a first stage have a 1,250 km length and convey ten billion cubic metres of gas. The quantity is to double in a second stage.

At the signing ceremony, the three countries energy ministers underscored the need to expand the pipeline to other potential European customers.

On the other hand, the Algerian hydrocarbon "Sonatrach" and the Spanish "Enagas" companies signed a draft treaty on the purchase by Spain of four to six billion cubic metres of gas per year to be conveyed by the pipeline.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Meets PRC Deputy Foreign Minister

AB0505214091 Khartoum SUNA in French 1615 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Khartoum, 5 May (SUNA)—On Sunday in Khartoum, the head of the Revolution Command Council, General 'Umar al-Bashir, met the Chinese deputy minister for foreign affairs, who arrived in Khartoum on Saturday evening for an official visit of several days to the country.

The Chinese official told SUNA that bilateral relations are based on mutual cooperation and affirmed that Khartoum and Beijing hold identical views on international and bilateral questions. The Chinese deputy minister for foreign affairs also said that his country and Sudan have agreed to increase their volume of trade, adding that Sudan and China had reached an agreement on calling for an international conference to study the cause of the Middle East problem in which the PLO, the sole representative of the Palestinian people, will take part. The Chinese official also stressed that Sudan and China are against foreign intervention in the affairs of [words indistinct].

Cabinet Amends Preventive Detention Law

EA0605183091 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 5 May 91

[Excerpt] In its session yesterday morning chaired by Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the Council of Ministers, the Council of Ministers endorsed the adjustment of Articles 40 and 41 of the Law of the National Security Body concerning the definition of the period and circumstances of preventive detention. His Excellency Ali Ahmad Sahlul, foreign minister and acting official government spokesman, said that as a result of the adjustment there will be no mandate for preventive detention by the security body as has been the case (?before).

He added that the adjustment comes within the framework of the decision by the RCC chairman to release the political detainees, and that preventive detention will now be subject to judicial supervision. He further pointed out that the adjustment underlines the revolution's credibility and its desire to expand the base of participation in political work and has (?made it easier) for the bodies to open up a new chapter and bury past differences for the sake of the participation of all sons of Sudan in [word indistinct]. [passage omitted]

Conference on Internal Migration Ends

EA0605182291 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] The regional conference to study migration in Sudan ended its business today and issued its resolutions and recommendations. The participants stressed the role of the scientific method in reformulating policies to tackle [word indistinct] taking the refugee issue with all its political and economic aspects, and its consequences in raising the level of urban poverty, as well as the deterioration of rural life. This confirms the failure of the previous methods followed for development and urbanization.

The participants stressed that the deterioration affecting the environment in the region was caused by pollution emanating from the industrial countries, which has harmful consequences on the climate of the continent. The participants in the conference confirmed that the migration phenomenon in the Sudanese region must be considered a harmful phenomenon with numerous causes and effects. Even though it may have some positive effects, it does have negative aspects since migration represents a phenomenon reflecting processes with a social and economic content.

Libya Offers Higher Education Scholarships

EA0605153091 Khartoum SUNA in English 0914 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Khartoum, 5 May (SUNA)—Arab Libyan Jamahiriyah has allocated 90 higher education scholarships in Libyan universities in different specializations except pharmaceutics and medicine.

Sudan ambassador to Libyan Jamahiriyah scholarships came within the framework of making use of Libyan higher education institutions which are based on expansion in technical education. [sentence as received]

On the other hand the ambassador explained that the Jamahiriyah has alloted 150,000 tonnes of wheat from municipality of Sirte to State of Darfur within framework of (?interrelations) between them in a bid to bridge the food gap in Darfur. The move proves the deep ties between Sudanese and Libyan people and the strategic dimension of integration between the two countries.

Former Ruler Notes Judiciary Role in Amnesty

EA3004211491 Khartoum SUNA in English 0955 GMT 30 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Khartoum, 30 April (SUNA)—Field Marshal (retired) 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Hasan Siwar al-Dhahab [former head of state], has hailed the recent decision taken by the chairman of the Revolution Command Council, Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir, releasing the political detainees to the observation of the judiciary. Describing the move as historical, Siwar al-Dhahab said the decision has put the preventive arrest under the judicial control.

Siwar al-Dhahab, who was addressing the second session of the founding conference on political system, said Sudan is enjoying a distinguished and unprecedented judiciary.

"Opposition abroad should be included in amnesty and should be informed on the new attitude in Sudan which [is] based on social justice, [no closing quote as received] Siwar al-Dhahab said. [passage omitted].

The secretary of Khartoum State Dr. Jalal M. Ahmad has demanded the projection [as received] of civil service, criticizing the negative impacts resulted from the policy purging adopted during the previous partisan system of rule. [sentence as received].

Tunisia

Ben Ali, Craxi Review Tunisian-Italian Relations

LD0605173191 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 May 91

[Excerpt] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received this morning at the presidential palace in Carthage, Mr. Bettino Craxi, secretary general of the Italian Socialist Party and personal representative of the UN secretary general, with the attendance of Mr. Mohamed Jeri, minister director of the Presidential Office.

Following the meeting, which was also attended by the Italian ambassador to Tunisia, Mr. Bettine Craxi said he was honored to meet President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and that he reviewed with him the situation in the Mediteranean and Middle Eastern regions and the difficult issues which require solutions. He added that he also discussed with the head of state Tunisian-Italian relations, which he described as always good. [passage omitted]

Official Condemns Violence in Schools

LD0605191291 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] During his visit to Sfax today, Chedli Neffati, Democratic Constitutional Rally [RCD] secretary general, inspected the project to clean up Mraya suburb in northern Sfax. This has made it possible to remove the falling buildings and to supply the suburb with drinking water and electricity.

During his visit Chedli Neffati supervised a meeting with the RCD cadres in the region. He pointed out that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali attaches great importance to the conferences of the RCD branches, which will commence in a few days. They are important political events which deepen dialogue and review the positive points in RCD activities in order to consolidate them and review the negative points in order to avoid them in the future.

The RCD secretary general stressed that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali always recommends doing good things for the young, who are the pillar of the future; and women, who make up half the society.

He said that the achievements during the recent years of changes in the fields of national reconciliation, establishing democracy and human rights, and deepening the Arab, Islamic, and Maghreb roots of Tunisia were met domestically and internationally with appreciation and consideration. A small group was upset at seeing all these achievements fulfilled in a short period, and at finding all this popular gathering around President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. They resorted to violence and deception in an attempt to change our educational institutions from bulwarks of knowledge and progress to places of terrorism and sabotage.

Chedli Neffati stressed that Tunisia is committed as always to remaining a country of tolerance and harmony. On this occasion the RCD secretary general greeted with appreciation all the parents, teachers, and pupils who refused to go along with violence and who confronted the extremists in order to defend the sanctity of knowledge and its institutions.

UGTT Issues Communique on 1 May Meeting

LD0305153391 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 May 91

[Text] The Executive Bureau of the UGTT [General Union of Tunisian Workers] issued a communique stating the following: The executive bureau of the UGTT which convened yesterday evening under the presidency of Mr. Ismail Sahbani, the trade union secretary general, after having reviewed the general trade union situation and having assessed the May Day celebrations, expresses its satisfaction at the workers' rallying around their organization, the UGTT, which was shown clearly during this year's May Day demonstrations, and which makes the trade union structures exert efforts and show self-denial in being at the service of the interests of laborers, and to reach bigger gains and achievements.

The executive bureau expresses its deep dismay at the fact that some workers, among those who attended the workers' meeting at the trade union center on 1 May, deliberately caused trouble and confusion in an attempt to attack the meeting and harm trade union independence.

The Executive Bureau of the UGTT vehemently condemns these anarchic practices by elements who took advantage of the democratic atmosphere and forgiveness at the trade union. It expresses its determination to face up to these practices with all legal means in conformity with the statute of the trade union, and decides to set up a committee to inquire and determine the reasons, purposes, and responsibilities behind what had happened so as to take the necessary legal measures.

The Executive Bureau stresses that these practices will only prompt the trade unionists to continue their trade unionist struggle with determination and be attached to the independence of their organization from all political parties and tendencies.

Ben Ali Receives Call From Al-Qadhdhafi

LD0505054191 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali yesterday received a telephone call from Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, on relations between the two sisterly countries and the progress of Arab Maghreb unity.

Saudi Arabia

Support for U.S. Peace Initiative Voiced

LD0605190591 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1550 GMT 6 May 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 6 May 1991, SPA—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general, chaired the session held by the Council of Ministers at al-Yamamah palace in the city of Riyadh this afternoon.

After the meeting, Information Minister Ali al-Sha'ir made a statement to SPA in which he said: At the beginning of today's session, the Council of Ministers reviewed a summary of the reports concerning political and security developments in the Arab region, and hence the council followed up the progress of the international efforts and pursuits exerted by the United States toward establishing a just and comprehensive peace all over the Arab region.

In the light of this, the Council of Ministers reiterated the constant Saudi support for all efforts aimed at finding a just solution to the Palestinian problem, which is the basic Arab, Islamic, and international problem; and to putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, in order that peace may prevail over all the countries of the region so that they can continue their march toward development and prosperity.

In this context, the Council of Ministers expressed the Saudi Government's welcome for the U.S. initiative undertaken by Secretary of State James Baker on behalf of President George Bush because it is based on international legitimacy and stems from the spirit of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The minister of information added: On the other hand, having observed what some Arab and other media issued, and still issue, in fabricated and untrue noise about Saudi Arabia, the Council of Ministers reiterated its condemnation and denunciation of this media campaign. The Council of Ministers pointed out that the responsible source's statement issued two days ago by Saudi Arabia was clear and explicit and represented the reality of the Saudi stance, which supports every effort exerted toward peace in order to reach an early peace conference to achieve this purpose. [passage omitted]

U.S. Secretary of Defense Arrives in Riyadh

LD0605164991 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1620 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Riyadh, 6 May (SPA)—U.S. Defense Secretary Mr. Richard Cheney and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Riyadh this evening.

Mr. 'Uthman al-Humayd, assistant minister of defense and aviation for military affairs'; Staff Brigadier General Zubn Dubayn al-Rawaqi, commander of Riyadh airbase; David Dunford, charge d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy; and a number of other officials welcomed him at the airport.

Meets With Prince Sultan

LD0605194391 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1717 GMT 6 May 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 6 May (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general, received this evening at his office U.S. Defense Secretary Mr. Richard Cheney. The second deputy prime minister and the U.S. defense secretary held a meeting. [passage omitted]

King Fahd Donates Aid to Bangladesh

LD0305220291 Riyadh SPA in English 1942 GMT 3 May 91

[Text] Jeddah, May 3, SPA— King Fahd 'Bin-'Abd-Al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, has ordered that the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would provide a sum of SR [Saudi Rials] 400 million to the Government of Bangladesh to help in repairing public utilities damaged by the recent cyclone that hit the country recently.

The kind gesture comes after King Fahd orders on Wednesday for extending urgent assistance to Bangladesh where more than 100,000 people were killed and millions displaced as the result of the cyclone.

King Fahd also urged Saudi citizens to extend donations to their Moslim brothers in Bangladesh inline with the Islamic teaching calling for cooperation.

Jordanian, Sudanese Criticism Refuted

LD0305040891 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2035 GMT 2 Apr 91

[Text] Riyadh, 2 May (SPA)—An authoritative source has made the following statement to SPA:

Despite Saudi information media observance of the instructions issued by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, at the beginning of the month of Ramadan not to answer attempts by certain Arab newspapers to intimidate the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the bickering and hostile comments of those papers—whose aim has been become overt and known—should be held in contempt.

Out of the desire to clarify Arab and Islamic opinion, which stems from the kingdom's eagerness to speak the truth and avoid the use of the methods of misleading and cheap sensation which are rather useless, we have found it necessary to point out what a number of Jordanian and Sudanese papers have published during the last few days fabrication, lies, and fallacies and have attempted to persuade the Saudi media to join them. In line with its ethics and commitment to Islamic morals and Arab values, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia tries to avoid all of this. Such a position, however, should not bar us from making the following comment:

First, information in our possession with regard to the stand of a number of Jordanian officials, led by the minister of Islamic affairs, holy places, and religous trusts, shows that there was a premeditated intention to obstruct the performance of the hajj rites. This is of prime concern to the Jordanian people. One should be careful here about the repercussions of involving the name of the kingdom in this matter. The kingdom reiterates, however, its welcome for all pilgrims from any country within the framework of the instructions which have been issued on this matter—instructions which have been published in the Saudi information organs and conveyed to fraternal Arab and Islamic countries' foreign ministries.

In calling for a boycott of the pilgrimage to God's House, one is trying to bar people from performing the fifth ordinance of Islam. This is a sin; no one should obey another man's call to sin.

Second, what the Jordanian AL-DUSTUR published on 27 April 1991, calling it a policy of malicious joy and gratification following the war for the liberation of Kuwait, is merely a trifle by people who avoid the use of good words. This behavior has been influenced by the policy of backing a losing horse since the Iraqi regime's invasion of Kuwait and even after its liberation.

If someone could see here that some people have forgotten their principles, then those who are concerned here are the people who have continued to support injustice and aggression in flagrant violation of international legality; they did not heed logic and reason. Notwithstanding their sins they are today urging to turn over the leaf of tragedy and calling for reconciliation and forgetting the past as if nothing had ever happened.

They did not understand that what happened by the occupation of Kuwait and the threat to the security and stability of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was one of the most adominable crimes in the history of man. Retribution came from God, who made the vanquished triumph over the oppressor.

Third, we come to what the organ of the Sudanese National Salvation published on 13/10/1411 AH [27 April 1991] quoting a well-known Palestinian official. We explain that those who conspired against the Arab nation were not those who supported the Palestinian cause from 1945 to this day, and were not among those who placed their material and political resources in the service of the Palestinian cause at home and abroad, and were not among those whose honest and unblemished course of action is supported by history. Those who conspired against the Arab nation were the ones who broke up Arab solidarity, and they were the ones who said to the tyrant: Go forward, we are with you; and they were the ones who were complacent by not speaking the truth.

Here, we are not going to enumerate the attitudes of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia toward the Palestinian issue since the time of the late King 'Abd-al-'Aziz to the time of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian servant of the two holy mosques—attitudes that are wellknown far and wide and known to every fair-minded person who is aware of truth.

We would, however, like to stress that the Palestinian issues comes at the top of the preoccupations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the field of general policy of the kingdom—a matter that is backed by historical evidence and facts old and new inside Arab and Islamic organizations and at international forums.

With the international changes, the Palestinian cause has become during the time of King Fahd bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the fundamental axis around which revolves the policy of the kingdom. There is no wonder that, as King Fahd in this very stance proceeds from a strong foundation, a right path, and a clear attitude, he presents assistance and support with the sole aim of the interests of the Palestinian people.

The source concluded the statement by saying: We would not have wanted to reply to those media if it were not for the fact that we feared our silence would be interpreted in a way other than reality, which we made clear. We are strong with God's help [word indistinct] which began to distinguish the bad from the good.

Truth has emerged triumphant, as God Almighty said: For the scum disappears like froth cast out; while that which is for the good of mankind remains.

Yemen

Cooperation Minutes Signed With Algeria

JN0405140691 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] The fourth session of the Yemeni-Algerian joint committee for economic and technical cooperation ended at the Planning and Development Ministry last night. The minutes of the session were signed. The minutes include provisions on cooperation in various economic and educational fields. The minutes were signed by Yemeni Labor and Vocational Training Minister 'Abd-al-Rahman Dhiban and by Algerian Minister Delegate for Vocational Training Abdenour Keramane. The signing ceremony was attended by 'Abd-al-Malik al-Mu'allim, Labor and Vocational Training Ministry undersecretary; the Algerian ambassador to our country, members of the joint committee, and other officials.

Abdenour Keramane and his accompanying delegation left Sanaa this morning. He was seen off by Labor and Vocational Training Minister Dhiban, the Planning and Development Ministry undersecretary, the Labor and Vocational Training Ministry undersecretary, and the Algerian ambassador in Sanaa.

Saddam, Kurdish Leader Barzani Meet in Baghdad

JN0605151791 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1505 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] A spokesman for the Democratic Party of Kurdistan has said Iraqi President Saddam Husayn today met with the party's leader, Mas'ud Barzani, who arrived in Baghdad today to resume negotiations with the Iraqi Government. The spokesman said the talks between the two sides will deal with ways to bring about democracy in Iraq through free elections.

Negotiations With Kurds To Resume 'Next Week'

JN0605150291 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 3 May 91 p 1

[Text] AL-THAWRAH has learned that representatives of the Kurdish parties will arrive in Baghdad next week to resume talks with state officials. The dialogue began two weeks ago and ended with an agreement in principle. The agreement was described as being positive and a good start for promoting the experience of autonomy for our Kurdish people in a manner that will boost Iraq's territorial integrity.

According to information available to AL-THAWRAH, representatives of Kurdish parties will come to the meeting with a paper expressing joint, detailed views on the issues discussed in the first phase of the dialogue.

Other Kurdish figures are expected to join the dialogue along with the four personalities that attended the first meeting. Those four were: Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan; Muhammad Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman, secretary general of the People's Democratic Party of Kurdistan; Rasul Mamand, secretary general of the Socialist Party of Kurdistan; and Nechirvan Idris Barzani, member of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan.

Saddam in Tikrit, Meets Local Party Officials

JN0605190791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1825 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 6 May (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has said that Iraq's recent experience is unprecedented, and that it marks a severe, virtually unprepared test. Iraq's (?destiny) and land were tested, the president added.

It is natural that honorable people in Iraq should have felt the crisis more strongly than others, and the honorable [words indistinct] who triumphed.

During a visit to Tikrit 170 km north of Baghdad, his excellency the president said honorable people take the path of righteousness [words indistinct] their duties and made them inattentive to the mobs [word indistinct] and not only the mobs, since this description alone is not enough, although there was a lot of demagoguery involved, and honorable people have a right to mildly reprove those who neglected to be on their guard.

His excellency also said: Everyone had to be alert at the right time and to warn others so the good ones could be vigilant, gather themselves, and mobilize ahead of time in order to confront the evil ones and react in an organized, accurate manner at the right time.

At the beginning of the meeting, President Saddam Husayn listened to a briefing from the Salah al-Din governor, who also answered President Saddam's questions about living conditions and the progress of work in those state enterprises that directly affect the citizen's living conditions. The governor asserted that from the beginning of the imperialist-Atlantic aggression against Iraq, the sons of our people in the governorate demonstrated readiness to offer sacrifice for the sake of great Iraq's safety and security and to defend its reputation and dignity.

In this regard, the governor added, the governorate witnessed an unprecedented popular uprising by thousands of citizens, who came from villages, districts, and subdistricts to express their readiness to offer all sacrifices possible for the sake of Iraq's pure soil. The sons of the governorate also participated fully in the reconstruction campaign, helped restore the facilities that directly affect services to our people and extended massive assistance to implement the service projects.

The president commented on this by saying: Iraqis are chivalrous people, and because they are chivalrous people, they have done what they have done.

The secretary of the party branch in the governorate then reviewed the individual and collective positions taken by the sons of the tribes, which indicate a deep understanding and great sense of sacrifice and which bolster the state of steadfastness and morale that grew during the phase of the unjust aggression.

At the conclusion of the meeting, his excellency greeted the governorate citizens who gathered in front of the governorate building to express their love and adherence to the courageous leadership and the great principles his excellency has pursued on the path of building great Iraq. They reaffirmed their pledge, just as all Iraqis have done, to remain loyal to the revolution and its courageous leadership.

President Saddam Husayn affirmed that the spirit of chivalry in the Iraqis was epitomized by the strong solidarity in confronting the evildoers, who came from beyond the borders.

He pointed out that this is why the demagogues' reliance on the organized evil, suspect, and traitorous element became clear at the moment of agreement between the foreign forces and the internal elements.

His excellency stressed that the sons of the governorates in which the demagogues appeared will certainly demand the trial of those who failed to carry out their duty and did not alert honest people.

His excellency defined what is required from the Iraqi people at this stage, namely, healing the wounds and rising quickly on the basis of glory for the Iraqis. He explained that this conforms with the true historical trend and the foundations of great glory, in a manner that upholds principles.

President Saddam added: We did not come to power to be rulers. We came to serve, and we will not abandon our duties. He explained: These are the principles we have read about in the literature of the party since we joined it when we were young. He added: We were honest when we adopted these principles as preparatory school students. At that time, we knew nothing about government.

Tariq 'Aziz Comments on Kurds, Ties With Turkey

TA0605193091 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1810 GMT 6 May 91

[Interview by Mehmet Ali Birand with Iraqi Vice President Tariq 'Aziz in Baghdad; date not given—recorded in English with Turkish subtitles; from the "32d Day" program]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Birand] You were very harsh in suppressing the Kurds. The people ran away in panic.

['Aziz] No, we were not very harsh. We did what every government would do to restore peace and order. Anyone would have done the same. Earlier, the people saw the U.S. bombardment but did not really understand it. This time, they thought they would be caught in the middle of the war and panicked. Certain Kurdish leaders encouraged this exodus; they participated in it.

[Birand] Who was responsible for this big exodus? Kurdish groups led by Barazani and Talabani?

['Aziz] I do not know. When they were here I asked them. They said it was not them. They said that they did not want their people to leave their homes and flee to the border region. They stressed that such a situation are not in their interests. I took note of what they said.

[Birand] The Iraqis claim that their Army is in control of the north, that the situation is back to normal, and that the Kurds themselves want to negotiate with Baghdad. In other words, they claim that the Kurds are sitting at the negotiating table because they want to, not because they have to.

['Aziz] This is Iraq's own concern and must be resolved from this angle. We will live together. The current balance of power is temporary. If we try to solve the Kurdish problem through temporary and artificial measures, it will emerge once again in one to two years. We do not want that. On the contrary, we want a stable and lasting solution. It must be a solution acceptable to all.

[Birand] What about autonomy? What will emerge at the end of your talks with the Kurds? What will the conditions of this autonomy be in practical terms?

['Aziz] Well, there has been autonomy in northern Iraq since 1974. It was implemented for 17-18 years. The leaders of the Kurdish parties, Barazani, Talabani, and the others criticized this autonomy. They have their own views about what should be done. All right, we are ready to listen to them. Therefore, there can be no harm in the talks between the government and the concerned parties. We have positive ideas about developing the situation in the north. For this, we want to cooperate with the people there. We want them to work together with us, and to help us establish stability. In that way, we can bring about economic and political development in the north. But what will be done will not be very different from what was done in the past. That is a self-developing autonomy that does not divide the unity of the state and the people.

[Birand] In fact, the contents of these talks are not very clear. The parties have not gone into the details yet. They discuss autonomy only in principle.

['Aziz] Politicians, lawyers, and experts all have different views about autonomy. But autonomy is autonomy. It is self-rule by regional people at the local administration level, without hurting the integrity of the state. It's unchanging rule is the country's integrity and the supremacy of the central administration. Local issues such as health, education, agriculture, tourism, and so on can be decided on by an assembly elected by the people in the region.

[Birand] According to Baghdad, these rights already have been granted—since 1975. Now perhaps they will be expanded a little. Then, Tariq 'Aziz says, Talabani and the others will participate in the democratic elections to be held, and if they win, they take control of the local administration. What really bothers Baghdad is the presence of the foreign troops in northern Iraq. Baghdad wants them to leave as soon as possible. It claims that the solution to the refugee problem and their return to their homes will be delayed as long as the foreign troops remain.

['Aziz] This is a precedent. On their own, foreign countries decided to deploy troops in another country and refused to heed that country's objection and views. That is a danger. We all live in a region full of problems. You have these problems, just as we do. You might be faced with the same situation in the future. So we are puzzled by Turkey's general attitude regarding foreign troops in the region.

[Birand] Iraq now wants to forget the past and to revive its relations with Turkey, to turn a new page. Whether this new page will be turned will be determined during a visit by Vice President Tariq 'Aziz to Ankara soon.

['Aziz] I would not raise many expectations. It is quite important, however, in that it will be the first contact held between Turkish and Iraqi officials for a long time. We, the Iraqi Government, want to see and understand Turkey's stand.

[Birand] What will you tell President Turgut Ozal when you see him?

['Aziz] I will speak sincerely and frankly. I will tell him that we believe cooperation between neighboring countries must be viewed in the long term. Such relations cannot be short-term. Such relations should not be affected by passing incidents because we will live in this region for centuries to come. They will go. Furthermore, historically speaking, Turkish-Iraqi relations have been very good. With this visit, we want to resume our official contacts that have long been suspended. We want to reopen economic cooperation, which would benefit both countries. At the moment, foreign powers are intervening in our domestic affairs in the region. They make plans, they impose themselves. In the long run, this is not in either Iraq's or Turkey's interests. I will tell Ozal that we should not be too influenced by foreigners who stick their noses into our domestic affairs. I will tell him to think in the long term.

[Birand] Thank you very much, sir.

National Assembly Denounces U.S. Policy in North

JN0605124991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1155 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 6 May (INA)—The Iraqi National Assembly has strongly denounced the policies that the United States and the coalition countries have pursued to interfere in Iraq's domestic affairs and infringe on its national sovereignty.

In a statement issued today, the assembly urged Arab and world parliaments and all peace-loving nations to denounce the U.S. conduct, especially since Iraq has implemented all the UN resolutions, which it believes are illegal and contradict the UN Charter.

The statement says that the interference by the United States and its allies in northern Iraq and exercising pressure on Iraq by fabricating the case of the so-called Kurdish refugees runs contrary to the UN objectives and flagrantly interferes in the countries' internal affairs. The statement also says that the UN Charter does not give the UN Security Council the right to issue a resolution to interfere in the internal affairs of countries and to infringe on national sovereignty, which the United Nations has emphasized in the preamble of its charter. [passage indistinct]

The statement refers to the suspect policies pursued by the United States under the cover of humanitarian diplomacy, adding that this policy is an innovation by the West to violate the principles of international law and to reimpose the old colonial policies on the Arab region.

The National Assembly statement says that the Zionist entity's adoption of this policy [words indistinct] and an exposed hegemony on the region and the confiscation of the Palestinian people's national rights, particularly their right to self-determination.

Memo to UN Details 3-4 May U.S.-Saudi 'Violations'

JN0605143991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] U.S. and Saudi aircraft have engaged in further violations of Iraq's airspace, conducting reconnaissance and provocations.

A memo sent to the United Nations by Iraq's permanent UN representative noted that 3-4 May, two F-14's violated Iraq's airspace in a single formation flying at 720 km per hour at an altitude of 6 km. The aircraft overflew mainly al-Kut, Karbala', and al-Najaf.

Envoy on 'Serious Desire' To Improve Arab Ties

JN0605161391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1557 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 6 May (INA)—Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent envoy to the Arab League, has reaffirmed Iraq's concern and serious desire to turn over a new leaf in ties with Arab countries.

In a press statement he issued upon arriving in Cairo today to take up his new post, Najm said that Iraq is seriously and effectively endeavoring to deepen and bolster joint Arab action and improve it to serve the supreme interests of the Arab nation.

UN Team Tours Damaged Areas in Wasit Governorate

JN0605162591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1555 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 6 May (INA)—A United Nations Relief Program team today visited Wasit Governorate in eastern and central Iraq. Headed by the general coordinator of the program Fernanez [named as received], the team acquainted itself with the heavy destruction and considerable damage caused by the U.S. and allied aerial bombing and infiltrators from across the border to economic facilities, private property, and food and infant formula warehouses.

The team is made up of delegates from the League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UNICEF, the UN Higher Commission for Refugees, the World Food Program, and the World Food Organization.

'Large Groups' Return to Maysan Governorate

JN0605164491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1555 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 6 May (INA)—An INA correspondent has reported that the city of al-'Amarah, capital of Maysan Governorate, southeastern Iraq, today witnessed the return of large groups of the governorate's sons to their residence.

A number of the sons of the southern governorates had been forced to leave their villages and cities because of the air bombardment of the forces of the United States and its allies, and to escape acts of terrorism and annihilation carried out by the mobs who infiltrated Iraqi territory from Iran.

Regime Said To Transfer Chemical Weapons to North

NC0605201091 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1935 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] The sources of our revolutionaries have said [words indistinct] its chemical and bacterial weapons to new areas. The information available to our revolutionaries is that the regime has instructed its competent military organs to transfer these weapons to a number of governorates, particularly in the north. The regime's instructions confirm that the weapons are to be stored in certain areas there. The move coincides with the announcement [words indistinct] and its amounts.

'Specialized Data Center' Introduced at Ministry

JN0605172191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1637 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 6 May (INA)—A specialized data center has been introduced at the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization.

The center will organize and provide data for officials, decisionmakers, researchers, industrialists, and specialists [word indistinct] with the major growth in the available data and the significant progress in the technology to store and retrieve them.

The center will also provide stored publications through a variety of means, including data bases installed in personal computers in which various data are stored, and through microfilm, which include data related to the products of various companies, industrial standards and specifications [words indistinct], and scientific, engineering, and medical data bases.

Source Confirms Wheat Contract With Australia

JN0605132891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1240 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 6 May (INA)—A responsible Iraqi (?commercial) source has confirmed what Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih announced yesterday: Iraq and Australia have signed an agreement to provide Iraq with (?1) million tonnes of wheat this year. The source said: Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih signed in Amman yesterday a contract with Clinton Condon, chairman of the Australian Wheat Board.

In a statement to INA, the source expressed surprise at what some news agencies reported about the board having denying that an agreement has been signed. He said: The agreement was signed to bolster the Iraqi and Australian sides' desire to start and improve commercial ties between the two countries as soon as possible.

The source clarified that [words indistinct] to unfreeze $15 million of the Iraqi funds to cover for the value of the contract. He said the signed contract stipulates that the Australian side will ship 100,000 tonnes of wheat this month as soon as [words indistinct].

Radio on Kurdish Opposition to Talks With Saddam

LD0605134991 Tehran IRNA in English 1319 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 6, IRNA—Iraq's Islamic Movement of Kurdistan opposes any talks with Iraqi ruler Saddam Husayn, reported the "Voice of Revolutionary Iraq" [as received] today.

In its broadcasts, beamed from somewhere inside Iraqi territory, the radio read a statement by the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan as saying that in view of the "bitter experiences of the past any meeting with any official of the Ba'thist regime is considered void and unlawful."

It said the movement has no information about the details of the recent talks between Saddam and the leader of Iraq's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Jalal Talabani and neither did representatives of those Kurdish parties who visited Baghdad had consulted it. [sentence as received]

Many Iraqi Kurdish groups have expressed scepticism about the recent talks between some Kurdish leaders and Saddam, and have pointed out that latter has "earned international notoriety for his breach of accords with both the Kurds and neighbouring states."

In related news, the radio said that Sunday night the Iraqi regime moved a military division to the southern port-city of al-Basrah in a bid to check the activities of revolutionary forces, particularly at night time.

The hit and run operations of Iraqi guerillas have reportedly bogged down the Republican Guards, and the radio called on "popular forces" to target the division's headquarters.

According to an Iraqi citizen who sought refuge in Iran last night, most of the people who have taken shelter in the marshlands in southern Iraq are military deserters including ranking officers.

'Abdallah [not further identified] told IRNA in Ahvaz, that "hundreds of thousands have fled to the marshlands between al-Nasiriyah and al-Basrah including soldiers refusing to fight against their own people."

Kurdistan Legislature Meets, Names New Committees

JN0605155691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1511 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Irbil, 6 May (INA)—The Kurdistan autonomous region Legislative Council convened a session in Irbil today chaired by Speaker Baha'-al-Din Ahmad.

During the session, attended by Executive Council Chairman Ja'far 'Abd-al-Karim al-Barzanji and the secretaries-general of the autonomous rule administration, the council speaker announced that two committees have been formed. The first will receive and attend to families returning from mountainous areas, and the second will reorganize the administrative structure of the state agencies throughout the autonomous region. In addition, committees in the various governorates and their administrative units will assess the needs of the citizenry for [word indistinct] and services and then submit detailed reports to the council.

During the session the council heard a comprehensive report presented by the Executive Council chairman on a plan drawn up by the council and the general secretariats for the remainder of the year in the cultural, eduational, health, services, and agricultural sectors. The plan also calls for coordination with the Legislative Council members to remove the effects of the destruction suffered by the region following the imperialist-Atlantic-Zionist aggression against our striving country.

The council is set to convene its next session 12 May to follow up the work of its present term.

Dahuk Governor: U.S. Blocking Kurds' Return

JN0705082991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0707 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 7 May (INA)—Dahuk Governor Muhammad Bayruz Rustum has stated that the number of Kurdish citizens who returned to their homes has reached half the total number of the governorate's inhabitants.

In an interview with AL-THAWRAH today, he said the governorate has prepared all means of comfort and has restored all public services for its returning sons.

AL-THAWRAH notes the difficulties and obstacles that the U.S. forces in Dahuk and Zakho are placing in the way of the return of Kurdish families to their cities and villages. These forces detain thousands of families who refuse to stay in the Turkish-Iraqi border areas or in the camps that have been set up for what they call Kurdish refugees.

The paper says that the U.S. forces and their allies use various means of coercion, enticement, and deceptive propaganda campaigns to prevent families from returning to their homes and resuming their daily activities and normal lives.

AL-THAWRAH says that Kurdish families made statements to the paper saying they strongly oppose making the Kurds refugees in Iraq, their beloved homeland, as the United States wants. The families added that many pressures are being applied against thousands of Kurdish families who are being prevented from returning and who are being detained in the Iraqi-Turkish border areas near what they call refugee camps.

AL-THAWRAH refers to the many obstacles blocking the return of Kurdish families to their cities and villages, such as the U.S. forces setting up checkpoints and the continued and intensive enemy flights over the border cities and villages.

Saddam Has 'Deep, True' Relations With People

JN0605083991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0710 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 6 May (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has underscored the deep, true relationship between Saddam Husayn and Iraq's masses. In today's editorial, the Iraqi paper notes that this fact has today become crystal clear. The fact expresses itself after the dust of the ordeals has gone and things have become clear. The fact is—without pressure, lying, or falsification—the Iraqis want Saddam Husayn; they love him as they love Iraq, its soil, and sky; and they love him as they love themselves.

The paper reviews the expressions of profound love with which President Saddam Husayn was received during his recent visits to al- Anbar, Diyala, and Ninawah. The paper says that Saddam Husayn found a flood of men, women, children, and old men who came to express the love and faithfulness which the men of Iraq possess as well as their joy at meeting their beloved leader. They came to say their word with awareness and without any influence except that of faithfulness and feelings of love; they came to say that they are with Saddam Husayn and with Iraq.

The paper says that the relationship among the Iraqis is clear; it is drawn by the waves of masses which have always cheered the leader not in al-Anbar, Diyala, or Ninawa only, but in every district and area which was able—thanks to its faithful sons—to root out the evil and prevent it from reaching it, desecrating it, or staying in it.

Concluding, AL-QADISIYAH says: If the enemies and rancorous persons have turned the difficult and delicate circumstances which the Iraqis faced in the past into a basis and a wager for them and for their abortive intentions and ambitions in the land and people of Iraq, their wagers and dreams are falling with the morning of every new Iraqi day. The light of a new dawn crowned with great hope broke out instead of the dark future which they drew up for Iraq and for which they prepared whatever they could.

'Responsible' Media Role in Society Urged

JN0605193891 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 3 May 91 p 7

[Article by Wadad Naji: "Media Control, the Old-New Role"]

[Text] For some time now, news media, especially the press, have been playing their responsible role in locating and proposing solutions to defects in the performance of some state institutions. This is in addition to the media role of highlighting positive aspects and serious and persistent efforts to serve the community with a view to promoting such positive conduct. This would help overcome the aftermath of the brutal U.S.-Atlantic aggression against Iraq in all its chapters and allow the country to restore its genuine, civilized, pan-Arab face.

We do not depart from facts when we say that this responsible media role is nothing new. News media did play an important role during some stages of Iraq's revolutionary march, especially in the second half of the seventies. The media focused on flaws in the performance of some state institutions, and demanded that administrative leaders call those responsible to account and work to rectify the defects to accelerate the movement of economic and social development. Leader Saddam Husayn personally followed up the interaction between the media and the administrative bodies and how it served society.

No one denies that one of the most important results of this creative policy of construction was clearly manifest in Iraq's ability to mobilize its human and material resources to beat off the forces of backwardness and racism that targeted Iraq's sovereignty and independence, and to score the splendid victory in the eight-year war. Naturally, this long war had a negative impact on society. Because the media were preoccupied with the news of the fierce fighting on the fronts, and because the fateful challenges necessitated centralization to run everday life, the role of media as an effective apparatus watching the performance of administrative bodies receded.

It would seem that administrative bureaucracy in the country found that period suitable for catching its breath and adjusting its work in a manner that would dwarf the media's role and create some sort of nominal coexistence between itself and the new formulas drawn up by the revolution to develop economic and administrative conditions. Its comments on the few remarks published by newspapers about the suffering of citizens when dealing with some departments were characterized by lying, fact-twisting, evading responsibility, persisting in mistaken policy, and challenging anyone who contemplated changing the system for the better.

To complete the dimensions of the bureaucratic game, some administrative elements bought the consciences of some junior journalists assigned to monitor performance. They drowned them with gifts, or gave them privileges in obtaining products of the companies that were to be monitored. This was in return for these journalists turning their reports into tools to promote certain activities or praise administrative officials and give glowing performance appraisals—as desired by officials, not as demonstrated by facts. For many years, the newspapers were full of press reports of this sort, and the news media were propaganda organs for administrative bureaucracy rather than true watchdogs.

The result was that illegitimate interests in some production and services establishments grew, and the number of people taking advantage of the extraordinary circumstances of the war increased. The interests of these people were completely out of line with any true democratic practice intending to locate and rectify shortcomings. They therefore disdained media monitoring, which began to regain an active role at the direct orders of leader Saddam Husayn immediately after the eight-year war. This was made clear by the very inflexible responses by some administrative bodies to negative remarks published in local papers, and by a certain high-handedness adopted by these bodies, away from the minimum level of ethical and civilized dealings. This disdain was also manifested in attempts to circumvent clear signs of defects by using grand phrases and resounding words lacking any substance.

The media, especially the local papers, restored their responsible role in criticizing deplorable social and administrative phenomena after the 30-state aggression against Iraq. This marks a prelude to deepening democratic practices and expanding the size of popular participation in making and implementing decisions, as approved by the political leadership a few years ago. However, the circumstances of war and aggression prevented the media from playing this role in a proper way. For some, the press was engaged in an unprecedented activity; reactions ranged from satisfaction with this policy of allowing the media the role of a window for citizens to express their suffering and desire to help rectify flaws in society, to inflexibility toward the publication of criticism of negative practices at this stage in particular. This was considered as a sort of alignment with the forces of defection, which are supported and backed by imperialist and Zionist forces as they seek to overthrow the revolutionary regime in Iraq.

In fact, this opinion entails an exaggerated approach, for in most political systems, media play a major role—albeit with varying degrees—in monitoring the performance of governments and individuals and in expressing the opinion of the majority toward important developments. This is why it is called the (fourth authority), after the executive, legislative, and judicial authorities. If the role of the media in capitalist systems—which are based on the sanctification of the freedom of the individual at the expense of the group as well as on conflicts among classes—is to help absorb public anger against representatives of major monopolies so that the latter can dominate society economically, politically, militarily, and humanly, then this role, in the revolutionary experiments that have freedom and democracy at the foundations of their ideological structure—like Iraq's experiment—takes on an extraordinary importance in making the masses aware of the major challenges and in shedding light on the fundamental defects in society, with a view to helping authorities make correct decisions and qualitative strides in all walks of life.

This means that the special circumstances in the country after the 30-state aggression and the continued provocative and conspiratorial role by the imperialist and Zionist forces do not justify preventing the media from performing their responsible role. Indeed, these special circumstances require further courage and frankness in criticizing and diagnosing condemned phenomena. This is the only way to overcome the aftermath of the brutal American- Atlantic aggression in record time, and to deprive enemies of the opportunity to inflict setbacks on us, as happened in Egypt after 1956.

We do not expect the press and other media to reach full maturity in playing their desired role at this time. Not all published views and remarks should be viewed as facts beyond doubt. Errors, misunderstandings, and [word indistinct] criticism are expected, and they need some time to be overcome. Dialogue resulting from different perspectives helps to provide mature decisions and give sound views as long as the aim is to continue the march of development, progress, and cultural resurgence, despite enemy challenges.

Levi Supports Upgrading Relations With USSR

TA0605173891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 6 May 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by political affairs correspondent Arye Golan at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem "a short while ago"—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Golan] [passage omitted] We asked for the foreign minister's comment on the Moscow report regarding the imminent resumption of diplomatic ties—or rather, the upgrading of diplomatic ties—between Israel and the USSR.

[Levi] We have this custom of never commenting on such reports, because we had similar reports in the past. When the Soviet foreign minister arrives, we will receive him and discuss things in depth. The issue at stake is not the resumption of relations, because relations have already been resumed, but rather the upgrading of relations. [passage omitted]

[Golan] Do you expect him to bring some original Soviet ideas that will promote the peace process?

[Levi] We will not tell them what to say. From what we have heard from Secretary of State Baker, the Soviet Union will accept the principles of the process as we and the secretary of state agreed here, in Israel, and there will be no action contradicting these principles. But, naturally, we can neither speak on the USSR's behalf or tell them what to say. After we hear what their stand is, we will check thoroughly to see whether their views are coordinated with the United States: whether they accept the principles with regard to that nonauthoritative encounter, which should be unable to coerce, vote, guide, or serve as a podium for arbitration or appeals; whether they concur with the two-track approach and with our line with regard to the Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza population and the phased process as detailed in the ideas raised with the secretary of state and in the ensuing agreements. After that, we will know whether the Soviet Union is pursuing the direction we have been told. I hope it is.

[Golan] Will it then be able to extend its token patronage to the regional conference?

[Levi] As we said, any deviation from these principles will result in the dissolution of the joint U.S.-USSR aegis, because sponsors cannot hold contrasting views. Israel will not follow a line which contravenes its agreements with the secretary of state.

On the other hand, we expect the Soviet Union to decide to upgrade relations, and the sooner the better.

[Golan] Thank you very much, Mr. Foreign Minister.

Shamir Expects Bessmertnykh To Announce Ties

TA0605192791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir expects the resumption of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union to have positive results on the political process in the region. After an address before Haifa businessmen, the prime minister told our correspondent Nati Zilberman that he expects the Soviet foreign minister to make an official announcement about the resumption of ties during his visit here.

In a talk with reporters, the prime minister endorsed Minister Sharon's remarks on the commando of stool pigeons [Sharon's remarks at the airport on 5 May about Knesset members who report to the United States on facts related to settlement in the territories], saying that there is substance in these remarks.

Interviewed on Mideast Peace

AU0605150791 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 6 May 91 pp 167-172

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Stefan Simons, Hans Werner Kitz, Rudolf Augstein, and Olaf Ihlau in Jerusalem; date not given: "I Want Peace"]

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. Prime Minister, the U.S.-led alliance has won the Gulf war. Will this victory bring the Middle East closer to a comprehensive peace order? Is there a chance for an end to over 40 years of war and hatred between Israel and its Arab neighbors?

[Shamir] Many experts on the Middle East believe that. There is a readiness among leading politicians in the countries in our region to make an effort to achieve peace with Israel. However, we are only talking about feelings and individual assessments. We cannot talk about facts yet.

[DER SPIEGEL] After the Gulf war President Bush saw encouraging signs in the Arab states suggesting more flexibility in their attitude toward Israel. Is this still true today?

[Shamir] I am not sure that this is 100 percent true. Various members of the U.S. Administration—Bush may be one of them—believe that the political conditions are better now for launching efforts to achieve understanding between Israel and the Arab world.

[DER SPIEGEL] You are talking about feelings and impressions. Are the Arab states willing now to at least accept the existence of a Jewish state in the region?

[Shamir] What happens in practice is important. Of course, we would be glad if the impression would materialize. We on our part are most willing to meet with leading Arab politicians to conduct direct talks to achieve peace between their countries and our country.

[DER SPIEGEL] Currently it looks as thought the peace process would collapse even before it has really started. Israel is held responsible for this.

[Shamir] This would be wrong. We are really trying to do everything possible to get negotiations under way. Israel is the only country in the region that has never changed its basic position. Only direct talks lead to peace. Such talks must begin now.

[DER SPIEGEL] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker stated recently in Damascus: "It is easier to block peace than to promote it." He was obviously referring to Israel. Before his Middle East mission, Baker asked for "confidence-building gestures," but Israel's reply was the establishment of new settlements in the occupied territories.

[Shamir] These are two completely different things. The U.S. concept foresees that some Arab states should show more understanding for Israel. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, for example, should stop boycotting Israel. Of course, they would get something in return from Israel, such as the improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian Arabs living in our country. Unfortunately, nothing has happened so far on the Arab side.

[DER SPIEGEL] However, the problem concerning the new settlements was a contentious issue during Baker's most recent visit to Jerusalem.

[Shamir] We did not discuss this topic at all.

[DER SPIEGEL] It has become clear during the visit to Washington by Construction and Housing Minister Ariel Sharon that this is a contentious issue.

[Shamir] This is not true. There is no conflict. Of course, there have always been differences of opinion—also concerning our right to establish settlements in the territories of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. We are convinced that we are entitled to establish settlements there. However, the United States views this as an obstacle to peace. There is no doubt that this is one of the most important points in the conflict between Israel and the Arab world. It is the essence of the conflict. Talks must be held as to whom these territories will belong in the future.

[DER SPIEGEL] Your predecessor Menachem Begin halted the establishment of new settlements while he was holding talks with Israel, which resulted in the Camp David Agreement.

[Shamir] This is not true. The creation of new settlements was only suspended for three months during the talks. Then it was resumed.

[DER SPIEGEL] All aspects of a regional Middle East conference, which you advocate, seem to be still controversial: The framework, the participants, and the agenda.

[Shamir] We are in the middle of negotiations. No agreements have yet been reached.

[DER SPIEGEL] Maybe we can ask the question about the contentious issues in a different way.

[Shamir] Why? Who sent you? Do you want to tell me what I have to answer?

[DER SPIEGEL] Of course not. But your foreign minister spoke of a breakthrough at the beginning of the Baker mission. Are you more pessimistic now?

[Shamir] No, not at all. I am an optimist. I think that the U.S. secretary of state must continue his talks with all parties involved so that we reach agreement when the peace conference can be opened. After all, we have essentially contributed to the proposal. This is not a concept that others want to force on us.

[DER SPIEGEL] Syria wants the United Nations to assume a leading role here. Why do you not trust the United Nations? After all, Israel supported all resolutions for the liberation of Kuwait during the Gulf war.

[Shamir] We naturally supported the anti-Iraqi alliance. The crazy dictator in Baghdad must be removed.

[DER SPIEGEL] Well, the dictator is alive. The United States did not succeed in removing him.

[Shamir] I very much regret the fact that he is still in power. However, it is not my task to criticize the United States.

[DER SPIEGEL] Washington sees a new ally in the Syrian leader Hafiz al-Asad. What makes him different from Saddam Husayn?

[Shamir] I do not see a difference at all. Israel has the same attitude toward both.

[DER SPIEGEL] Is this the reason for your reservation against Syria's call for a UN commitment?

[Shamir] We have always had bitter experiences with the United Nations. A majority was always automatically against Israel. We knew why we concluded the Camp David Agreement only with Egypt and the United States, without the participation of the United Nations. This is why it was successful.

[DER SPIEGEL] Should the EC participate in the peace conference?

[Shamir] Europe is apparently interested in participation. This has become clear to me after talks with European politicians. Baker envisages a role for the EC. We will continue our talks, and I hope that we will arrive at an agreement.

[DER SPIEGEL] Saudi Arabia, which in the U.S. view should become a cornerstone of the new order in the Middle East, does not want to participate in this regional conference. Does this not endanger the whole concept?

[Shamir] Of course, we are disappointed. However, the Americans are telling us that the Saudis never thought of playing an active role in this process. They are ready to do everything possible to support the process, but they want to remain in the background. We believe that this is not sufficient. They should do more.

[DER SPIEGEL] Egypt, the only Arab country that has so far supported the idea of a conference unconditionally, is beginning to withdraw. Cairo is afraid that Israel's refusal to agree to a compromise on the Palestinian issue will block the peace process.

[Shamir] We are in favor of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation. This might be a way to solve all Palestinian problems.

[DER SPIEGEL] A U.S. peace initiative failed a year ago because of the question as to who should represent the Palestinians.

[Shamir] Well, if one wants to achieve a certain goal, one must launch efforts time and again. Peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved overnight, the ditches are much too deep. Mr. Prime Minister, what are legitimate claims of the Palestinians in your view?

[Shamir] This will be the topic of negotiations and should not be discussed in public. In the Camp David Agreement we agreed to grant the Palestinian population in this country some kind of self-administration or full autonomy. Talks were interrupted with the killing of President Anwar al-Sadat. Now we must continue these talks.

[DER SPIEGEL] However, you would consider autonomy only a provisional solution.

[Shamir] Yes. After three years, talks on the final status of these territories would begin.

[DER SPIEGEL] But you categorically rule out a separate Palestinian state?

[Shamir] We have never ruled out anything. We are fulfilling the obligations resulting from the Camp David Agreement.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you really believe that, in the long run, you can force your will on 1.75 million Palestinians?

[Shamir] Are you speaking as a representative of the Palestinians?

[DER SPIEGEL] No, not at all. However, the basic idea of the U.S. peace initiative is the "territories for peace" formula.

[Shamir] It is true that President Bush said that. However, this is not the basic principle of our talks with the United States. We have never accepted the "territories for peace" formula.

[DER SPIEGEL] Not your government. But according to recent opinion polls, a majority of the Israeli population—58 percent—supports this concept.

[Shamir] I do not believe that. The best barometer of public opinion are elections. Elections are scheduled for November 1992. Then we will see. The majority of Israelis believe that we are the best guarantors of national security. They also know that I want peace from the bottom of my heart.

[DER SPIEGEL] Apart from biblical claims for the occupied territories, there has always been the argument that this territory is important because of its "strategic depth." Have Saddam's missiles that hit Israel's heartland shaken this concept?

[Shamir] You seem to be familiar with all theories. However, this is not logical. Every country needs a certain amount of territory, with or without Scud missiles. We do not want a buffer zone. It is a question of security. We do not hide our conviction that this piece of land belongs to us. However, we want to solve the specific problems of the Palestinians there.

[DER SPIEGEL] PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat believes that he will soon be able to play an important role again on the Middle East stage.

[Shamir] Mr. 'Arafat is certainly no expert on peace issues. He does not want peace, but only a violent confrontation with us. If we want to achieve peace with the Arabs, the PLO must not be involved in this process.

[DER SPIEGEL] What would you do if the United Stats exerted pressure on you to prevent a failure of its peace mission?

[Shamir] I hope this will not happen.

[DER SPIEGEL] However, U.S. Senator Bob Dole has already mentioned the possibility of reducing financial aid for Israel. The United States provides $3 billion every year. And you need additional money for the integration of the Soviet Jews.

[Shamir] This is an enormous human task. I hope that the Americans will help us in the future as well.

[DER SPIEGEL] Last year, when 200,000 Soviet Jews arrived in Israel, you said: "A large-scale immigration requires a greater Israel." Are you willing to limit the settlement of newly arriving Jews in the occupied territories, in order not to offend the Americans?

[Shamir] We have agreed not to send Soviet immigrants to the disputed territories.

[DER SPIEGEL] But you are sending them to the annexed part of East Jerusalem.

[Shamir] This does not apply to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the capital.

[DER SPIEGEL] In conclusion, let us talks about the relationship between Israel and Germany. It has been severely burdened by exports of German military technology to Iraq.

[Shamir] We regretted this very much and discussed it with the German Government. Foreign Minister Genscher explained the German position to me during his visit to Jerusalem. I believe him when he says that he is against the sale of weapons of mass destruction. Our relations are quite satisfactory now.

[DER SPIEGEL] Has the FRG Government done enough to prevent the export of weapons of mass destruction?

[Shamir] I do not think so, and Genscher does not think so either. However, it is probably difficult to control all branches of industry in a country like Germany, where the free market economy prevails. I hope that, after the experiences of this war, the German Government will do everything possible to prevent something like that from happening in the future.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for the interview.

Netanyahu: Pressure 'Not Going To Work'

TA0705113791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 7 May 91

[Address by Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to World Jewish Congress in Jerusalem; date not given, live or recorded]

[Text] What we need in the Arab states and among the Palestinian Arabs are not more Saddams but new al-Sadat's. That is, people to stand up, to take the risk, to summon the courage to make peace, and if they won't do it now I doubt they will do it later. This is the opportunity, this is what the world has to demand, to expect, and to ask. If they won't be asked they won't respond. I'm convinced of that. On the eve of the arrival into the Middle East of Mr. Bessmertnykh, and Mr. Baker again, our current indication for the moment is that the Arabs practically have not moved even an inch, and I would even say a millimeter.

The Arab countries that abut Israel, with whom we seek peace negotiations—we seek with others as well, but starting with these—have not moved a millimeter. Which brings us to the question, how do we exploit the opportunity that I spoke of a minute ago? Well, if the conditioned reflex of applying pressure to Israel is the one that will activate the international community, if pressure is brought on Israel—we have the Arabs, the Israelis here, the Israelis move here, the Arabs do not move—if now the Arabs see that pressure is applied on Israel, what incentive will they have to make any concessions? The answer is none. Why should they? So nothing will come of it. Pressure is not going to work for two reasons: First, it is not going to work, but secondly, we don't need it, and this is not the place that is requires pressure. If pressure, if encouragement, if demands for coming to the peace table, to making concessions are now required anywhere, it is on the Arab side.

Reportage on Visit by Dutch Foreign Minister

Van den Broek Arrives

TA0605172891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Visiting foreign minister of the Netherlands, Hans van den Broek, has leveled criticism at Israel's settlement policy. Arriving at the airport, he said that the Netherlands—which will be the EEC's next president—is ready to take an active part in promoting the peace process. Dan Eshel reports:

[Begin recording] [Eshel] According to Minister van den Broek, he has brought a message of friendship to Israel. In that case, we asked, why is the EC voicing criticism of Israel's settlement policy at this time? He replied: The EC has made no new pronouncements on this issue.

[Van den Broek, in English] We do consider it something to be regretted, because it is not conducive, in our view, for furthering the peace process which, we feel, is in such a crucial period at the moment.

[Eshel translates and continues] The visiting minister added that the two countries' ties are characterized by mutual trust, and that the main task lies at present is making a joint effort toward achieving peace for the benefit of all the nations in the region.

And this is what Foreign Minister David Levi said about the visiting minister:

[Levi] He can be termed a true friend. There are differences of opinion between Israel and the EC, but there is no alienation, and there certainly are no cross feelings. Differences of opinion exist, but we must maintain good and proper relations and pursue our fruitful economic and scientific cooperation. [end recording]

Discusses EC Role in Peace Process

TA0605202091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi demands that Europe speak with one voice on Middle East issues and regrets the fact that the actions taken by several countries in that continent contravene the EC's resolutions. In a meeting with his counterpart from the Netherlands, Minister Levi said that so far, Israel has heard nothing material about the Arabs' willingness to negotiate without preconditions.

The visiting minister, Hans van den Broek, said that the EC has never endorsed a resolution supporting a Palestinian state, and it has not declared that the PLO is the Palestinians' sole representative.

Says Netherlands Wants EC Role

TA0705102191 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 May 91 p 1

[Report by Asher Wallfish]

[Excerpt] Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek said last night that the European Community is interested in acting as a co-sponsor of a regional conference in the Middle East, along with the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

Talking to reporters outside the Foreign Ministry after his working session with Foreign Minister David levi, van den Broek said, "Our role would not be to impose anything but rather to contribute by speaking to all parties." Their meeting lasted 90 minutes longer than planned.

"Our member-states have ties with your region," he said. "Some, like the Netherlands, have traditional ties with Israel. Other Europeans have ties with Arab states. Still others have links with the Palestinians."

The Dutch minister said that peace and stability in the Middle East were not just a function of military factors. They were also a function of regional cooperation, a sphere in which Europe had a contribution to make.

Van den Broek said that while the endeavors of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker merit the full support of Europe, the EC sought to reinforce them. "We tell Israel, the Arabs and others that we feel it would be in the interest of the peace process if we encouraged the negotiations."

Levi conceded, "The peace process is of interest not only to the Arabs and Israel, but in fact to the whole world."

He said, "We seek to achieve comprehension between Israel and the entire European Community. But I would like to see Europe making decisions which would be respected by every member of the EC. I would not like each of them to make his own decisions. We have to be sure that whatever the EC resolves, is done in the name of the whole of Europe."

After his dinner with Levi, van den Broek went to the World Jewish Congress assembly where he received an award in the name of his government marking the Netherlands' 40-year-long campaign for Soviet Jewry. [passage omitted]

Meets With Shamir

TA0705113291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] The feeling that the Arab countries intend to change their attitude toward Israel is slowly fading away, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir stated today in a meeting with Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek. Our political correspondent Natan Gutman reports:

The tone Prime Minister Shamir used today in his meeting with the Dutch foreign minister attests to the pessimism prevailing with regard to the chances of including additional Arab countries in the political process. Mr. Shamir said that the fact that Saddam Husayn was not totally defeated and the feeling in the Arab world that he was awarded a prize has a detrimental effect on Iraq's neighboring countries. The feeling that these countries are inclined to change their attitude toward Israel is beginning to fade away, Shamir added.

The Dutch foreign minister said he had found a certain change in Syria concerning the tone used when speaking about Israel. Shamir rejected these displays of optimism, saying: Extremist countries apparently have an advantage. If they give even the slightest hint of moderation, it immediately arouses enthusiasm.

The visiting minister pointed out that the European countries support the U.S. initiative and want to take part in the process, and Prime Minister Shamir called on them to expand their aid to elements in this region. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1005 GMT on 7 May carries a similar report by political correspondent Arye Golan, who notes that in response to the Dutch minister's request to take part in the process the prime minister added: "Israel wants to see the quality of life for Palestinians improved, and would especially like to see the problem of the refugee camps resolved. This is one of the reasons for the Palestinians' bitterness. They have been suffering the consequences of their extreme positions toward us from even before the State of Israel was founded."]

The next foreign minister due in Israel is Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, who will arrive on Friday [10 May]. In a preliminary meeting Foreign Ministry officials held today with Soviet Consulate personnel, the Soviets said they knew nothing about plans to resume relations in the upcoming visit. All they said was: When Bessmertnykh arrives, we will know more.

Meets With Palestinians

TA0705134891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek told Palestinian activists in a meeting in East Jerusalem that the European countries have ideas on how to pursue the peace process but are not trying to impose them on others. Van den Broek added that the European countries should play an active role in the peace process because they are interested in the economic and social developments in the region which would be a key element in a stable peace arrangement.

The Dutch foreign minister voiced his optimism about the possibility of bridging the gaps in the positions of the sides. Our correspondent Mikha'el Tuchfeld reports that according to van den Broek, The Netherlands cannot ignore the PLO's support for Saddam Husayn during the Gulf crisis.

CSFR Premier: Syrian Arms Deal Not 'Fait Accompli'

TA0705104291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Marian Calfa, the prime minister of CSFR, this morning said the arms deal with Syria is not a foregone conclusion. Calfa was talking to Israel Radio reporter Gil Litman following a tour of East Jerusalem.

[Begin Calfa recording, in Czech with English voiceover] This is being considered here as a fait accompli, but it is not a fait accompli. That is the first thing. Second, I would like to say that this action should require also some understanding for our situation. Third, in coordinated action we can prevent it, we can avoid it. [end recording]

Greece's Samaras Foresees Cooperation

TA0705102891 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 May 91 pp 1, 10

[Report by diplomatic correspondent David Makovsky]

[Text] Israel and Greece are likely to embark on joint military-industrial cooperation, Greek Foreign Minister Andonios Samaras told THE JERUSALEM POST at the end of an historic three-day official visit which began on May 1.

"We think there is possible synergy in this field. We both have military industries. I think it could work out," Samaras said without elaboration. Defense ministry officials here also declined to comment on the nature of the cooperation.

The idea of joint cooperation in this sensitive area contrasts boldly with the chilly air between Athens and Jerusalem during the past decade, when the left-wing Pasok government of Andreas Papendreou was in power and was Israel's harshest critic in Europe.

Samaras said his visit—the first by a senior Greek official—is a sign that Greece is now committed to "balance" in its Middle East policy. Prime Minister Konstandinos Mitsotakis, who heads the conservative Greek government elected last spring, made and immediately kept a pledge to normalize fully diplomatic relations with Israel.

The boyish 40-year-old foreign minister spoke enthusiastically about trade relations with Israel. Samaras, who has an MBA from Harvard, spoke of the importance of improving cooperation in biotechnology, agriculture and joint Mediterranean tourism.

"We want to increase the total trade volume," he said.

Senior Israeli officials are confident that the roughly $150m. [million] in trade between the two countries can double in three to four years. Two-thirds of the trade at present comprises Israeli exports.

Samaras said Greece was "absolutely" in favor of Israel getting enhanced trade status in the European Community next year, when Europe carries out its 1992 economic integration plan.

One discordant note during the visit came when Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir demurred at Samaras's view that the Europeans should co-sponsor a proposed regional peace conference. Foreign Minister David Levi will discuss this further during talks with EC leaders in Brussels a week from today. Israel does not believe Europe should enjoy the same position as the U.S. and USSR and also wants to condition any European role on the EC's distancing itself from the PLO.

Samaras echoed a theme heard from many visitors—that all sides should capitalize on the Gulf war victory and move the region from conflict to peace. Quoting a Greek saying, he said: "There are few times in life when the train stops at your station."

Opposition Voiced to Left-Wing MK's U.S. Trip

TA0605102491 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 May 91 p 1

[Report by Michal Ydelman]

[Text] The departure of a group of Labor and left-wing MKs [Knesset Members] for political talks in Washington yesterday sparked off heated reactions from the right-wing parties and criticism even from Labor party figures. The right branded the delegation as sabotaging the government's peace process and weakening Israel, while the Labor personalities assailed the timing of the mission.

MKs of Labor, the Citizen's Rights Movement [CRM], Mapam [United Workers Party], and Shinuy were due for a series of talks with U.S. senators and congressmen to express the "peace camp's" positions and to declare that a "majority of Israelis are in favor of the principle of territories for peace."

Coalition chairperson MK Sara Doron charged that the delegation's departure, in the midst of a delicate political process, proves "that a parliamentary process is required to express no confidence in the opposition, when members demonstrate a lack of loyalty to the state. When the left-wing parties failed to persuade the public at home that their way is the right one, they opted for an illegitimate way of action, which weakens Israel's positions."

The delegation was organized on the eve of the Gulf war by Peace Now and consists, among others, of Yosi Beilin and Arye Eli'av of Labor, Dedi Zucker and Mordekhai Virshubski of the CRM, Ya'ir Tzaban of Mapam, all MKs, and Tzali Reshef of Peace Now. Labor MK Avraham Burg is due to join the delegation later this week.

However, Labor MKs 'Uzi Bara'm and Moshe Shahal, initially listed as members of the delegation, canceled their participation at the last moment, after consulting with their party leaders. They feared that joining the delegation in the midst of the political process could be interpreted as inviting American pressure on the government.

Bara'm's and Shahal's cancelation dealt a blow to Peace Now in the U.S., who considered these two MKs as a feather in their cap.

Beilin, who was due to leave for the U.S. last night to join the delegation, said that it was necessary to go to Washington now in order to balance the voices in the government against the political process and any concessions.

"Our message is that the opposition will support Prime Minister Shamir in (the idea of territories for peace), even if certain partners of his coalition threaten to bolt and withdraw their support.

"Shamir can therefore not use the threats of the right wing as an excuse for refusing to take part in the peace process," Beilin said.

Degel Hatora Condemns Pressure on Shamir

TA0705051791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] The leaders of the Degel Hatora faction will meet the prime minister to make clear their position regarding the peace process.

The head of the movement, Rabbi Avraham Ravitz, told our correspondent Yaron Enosh that his movement condemns the pressure applied to the prime minister by the right-wing parties, Tzomet and Tehiya, pressure meant to prevent the possibility of any negotiations. Degel Hatora's leader expressed the belief that it is important to further the peace process in accordance with the government's basic guidelines, regardless of whether it is through a regional or international conference.

Polls Reveal Rightist Trend After Gulf War

TA0105121091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 May 91 p A4

[Report by Dan Margalit]

[Text] The Labor Party is concerned over the findings of a public opinion poll on security issues and the peace process conducted by Professor Asher Arian of the Tel Aviv University Strategic Studies Center.

He found that "the public perceives the Likud, as opposed to the Alignment, as the party that would best know how to firmly insist, in the course of negotiations, on territories and peace; it is seen as the party that would best be able to guarantee a Jewish majority in the country; as the party that could lead to real peace; as the party that would manage to restore tranquillity and order in the territories; and that will preserve democracy in the country."

According to the research, 55 percent of the public support Likud candidates for senior government posts, compared to 32 percent who support Alignment candidates.

Among the findings: 29 percent changed their political-security positions as a result of the war. The breakdown is currently 15 percent who think that the importance of the territories for state security has grown, versus 14 who think their significance has declined.

Half the public polled said that the Arabs' goal is to eliminate Israel and kill Jews.

At the same time, the research discovered that the Gulf war increased the creeping conciliatory trend which has characterized Israel in the past few years. Support for dovish positions has grown in relation to long-term issues, Arian pointed out.

Only 8 percent support a unilateral withdrawal from the territories, the research found; 29 percent are ready to do so only in Gaza; 62 percent object. The attitude toward the territories was manifested in the following data: in favor of annexation and transfer—15 percent; annexation without transfer but also without granting civil rights to the Arabs—16 percent; annexation without transfer and with full rights for the Arabs—5 percent; maintaining the prevailing status quo—12 percent; autonomy—17 percent; returning most of the territories as part of a peace agreement—19 percent; a Palestinian state on part of the territories along with security arrangements—11 percent; a Palestinian state as part of the peace agreement—5 percent.

In 1987, only 53 percent of the Israelis supported use of nuclear weapons, whereas now they number more than 88 percent.

[Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 1 May, in a front-page report by aliyah correspondent Natan Ro'i, cites a poll conducted Dr. Ze'ev Katz of the Institute for Humanistic Secular Judaism, which indicates that "the trend among new immigrants is to support the Likud more than the Alignment, albeit with minor differences: 40 percent for the Likud and 36 for the Alignment." The poll involved "465 new immigrants in ulpans, absorption centers, and study groups in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Ben-Gurion Airport, Netanya, and Nazareth. It was conducted between December 1990 and March 1991."]

Indicate Leftist Trend Among Immigrants

TA0305101191 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 3 May 91 p 1

[Report by party affairs correspondent Amir Neumann]

[Text] A recent poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute shows that 63 percent of the immigrants define their political affiliation as leftist, while 18 percent define themselves as rightists. This fact notwithstanding, over 60 percent of the immigrants believe the territories should not be returned. At the same time, the poll shows that the question of the territories will not affect the way they vote. The poll also discloses that most immigrants favor the establishment of immigrant parties.

Asked what will affect their vote in the elections, 59 percent replied that they would vote for the party that proves itself with regard to the absorption of immigrants, and only 16 percent said they would be influenced by the question of the territories.

Dr. Mikhal Shamir of Tel Aviv University's Sapir Institute noted yesterday that the responses of the immigrants show that their vote will be determined by socioeconomic considerations.

Drugs Seized in North, South; Suspects Arrested

TA0405081891

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 1700 GMT on 28 April reports: "The head of the Galilee Police, Rami Rahav, today announced that they have foiled a series of attempts to smuggle drugs into Israel from Lebanon. Reporter Sylvia Leif notes that some of these shipments were intended for the United States. In one case, 150 kg of heroin were confiscated from a gang of Jews and Arabs who collected packages near the border at Metulla and Qiryat Shemona." The report goes on to say: "In another incident police waited in ambush and later caught two Druze brothers from Yirka who were handed eight packages of drugs from over the Lebanese side of the fence." The report also adds: "Rami Rahav related one futile attempt, carried out a month ago by Israeli and international dealers, to smuggle drugs to the United States."

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 29 April in a page 2 report by Yigal Kotzer reports: "Agents of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) in collaboration with Galilee District police detectives have recently uncovered an Israeli-American network of drug smugglers. The Galilee-based ring had reportedly smuggled some 16 kilograms of heroin, having a street value of about $2 million, to the U.S.

"Galilee police uncovered information about the ring toward the end of the Gulf war in February, when it was learned that Israeli criminals were smuggling heroin into the country from Lebanon with the aim of transshipping it to the U.S.

"The Galilee police officials declined to give details about the number of local arrests in the case, but said that three alleged Israeli members of the ring have been detained in the U.S."

In a long report on drug smuggling in the Negev by Ayelet Mazor, 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew on 29 April in a page 8 report says that "five kg of heroin, 19 kg of hashish, some $40,000, 60,000 shekels, and eight suspects are only the tip of the drug iceberg in the south." The report speaks of a wide-ranging operation conducted recently by the Negev District.

The article goes on to say: "On 16 April, authorities seized about one kg of hashish hidden in the walls of a chicken coop belonging to a 60-year-old Bedouin living near Rahat. Two days later, three kg of hashish and one kg of heroin were found in the possession of a resident of Yirka who had come to the south." The report also states that on 23 April, 16 kg of hashish and four kg of heroin were confiscated in two raids on Bedouin encampments.

Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0900 GMT on 30 April reports: "Galilee District policemen have seized 60 kg of hashish smuggled in from Lebanon. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the drugs were found in two vehicles stopped by police at a roadblock on the outskirts of Haifa. The drivers, who are brothers and known drug violators from Rehovot, will be brought before a judge today to be remanded in custody."

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 2 May 91, in a report by Menahem Horowitz on page A7, says: "Early yesterday morning three residents of a western Galilee village tried to smuggle one kg of heroin and two kg of hashish from Lebanon into Israel. They were apprehended by the Lebanon border unit minutes after receiving the narcotics. The incident occurred at around 0200 in the morning when a rented Subaru approached the orchards near the border at Metulla. Three youths alighted and were seen throwing a parcel from the Israeli side of the border fence over to Lebanon. Minutes later a large parcel was seen hurled from the Lebanese side toward Israel, which the three picked up and put in the car before driving off. The police called for the car to halt.

"One kg of heroin can produce 10,000 units, which can be sold on the market for a total of 500,000 shekels. This is the third time in the past few days that the Lebanon border police unit has captured drug smugglers."

Fatah Condemns Wanton Killings in Territories

TA0305180491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 3 May 91

[Text] Sources in the Gaza Strip have said that some families whose sons have been killed by masked men because of revenge and reprisals have received letters signed by Fatah placing responsibility for the killings on opportunistic elements who perpetrated these acts due to personal and non-national reasons. Moreover, Fatah considers those killed martyrs of the intifadah.

Territories Resident Guilty of Spying for Iraq

TA0605131491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] The court has found 'Umar Subhi, from Bayt Safafa south of Jerusalem, guilty of spying for Iraq. He left for Jordan and met with an Iraqi Embassy official in Amman. Later he held telephone conversations with an agent in Greece. During the Gulf war he transmitted information on aircraft and military vehicle traffic as well as on the location of industrial plants in Israel.

Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that Subhi pleaded guilty to the charges and claimed he committed the deeds for greed, as he was addicted to drugs.

Al-Masri Views U.S. Navy Harassment of Ships

JN0705084791 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 7 May 91 pp 1,23

[By Caroline Faraj]

[Text] Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri has stated that Jordan has repeatedly expressed through diplomatic channels its rejection of the harassment of al-'Aqabah-bound ships by the U.S. Navy stationed in the Straits of Tiran on the Red Sea.

Al-Masri said that Jordan is trying to solve this problem using the means available to it,

He added that this issue was discussed with U.S. Secretary of State Mr. James Baker during the two meetings that were held in Geneva and al-'Aqabah. The same topic has been raised by the Jordanian ambassador to the United States. It was also discussed at the United Nations by the sanctions committee and the UN Security Council. He pointed out that the current practices are not as strict as they had been.

Al-Masri said: We are constantly trying to explain our viewpoint on how much Jordan is affected by the U.S. Navy's implementation of the resolutions adopted against Iraq by the Sanctions Committee, emphasizing the magnitude of the harm done to the public and private sectors and the need to end this as soon as possible.

Western diplomatic sources say that the continuing interception operations and the diversion of several vessels on their way to al-'Aqabah carrying goods for the Jordanian market stems from the fact that the UN Security Council has not yet lifted the sanctions and the economic blockade against Iraq. Does this mean that this piracy will continue until the blockade on Iraq is lifted?

Over the past 10 days, the U.S. Navy has stopped three vessels carrying goods for the Jordanian market from reaching al-'Aqabah and asked that their cargo be unloaded in Port Suez to ascertain what they were carrying, after which they allowed them to proceed to al-'Aqabah.

Kuwaiti Envoy Alleges 'Unjust Media Campaign'

JN0505142691 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1255 GMT 5 May 91

[Excerpts] Amman, 5 May (WAKH)—An official at the Kuwaiti Embassy in Amman has condemned the continuing unjust media campaign in Jordan against Kuwait and its people.

Faysal al-Mukhayzim, the embassy charge d'affaires, said statements and claims against Kuwait and its people by some mouths are of no benefit whatsoever to the Jordanians and Palestinians that have been residing on the good soil of Kuwait for decades.

In a statement issued here today, Mr. al-Mukhayzim said the fact that a large number of Jordanians and Palestinians visit the embassy daily requesting to return to Kuwait provides conclusive evidence that these people do not care for or believe these allegations. It also constitutes the best answer to hireling mouths. [passage omitted]

Everyone knows, says the statement, that Palestinian brothers in the occupied territories execute those who collaborate with the Israeli occupation authority. Why should Kuwait be taken to task for punishing—not killing—those who collaborated with the Iraqi occupation forces, the statement wonders.

Accord Signed With Saudi Arabia on Pilgrimage

JN0605185091 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 May 91

[Excerpts] Dr. Ahmad Hulayyil, secretary general of the Ministry for Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, has returned to Amman from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia after having chaired the Jordanian side of the Jordanian-Saudi talks on the next pilgrimage season.

Dr. Ahmad Hulayyil spoke to our correspondent about the outcome of his talks with Saudi officials:

[Begin Hulayyil recording] We held an expanded meeting with the Saudi side under the chairmanship of his excellency Shaykh 'Abd-al-Wahhab 'Abd-al-Wasi', minister of pilgrimage and awqaf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I represented the Jordanian side. We signed an agreement concerning the brotherly relations that bind the two countries and the two ministries, and the constant cooperation between the Pilgrimage Affairs and Awqaf Ministry of Saudi Arabia and the Awqaf Ministry in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. We agreed on several of clauses, the most important being to maintain the same number of Jordanian pilgrims as in the past, taking into consideration the commitment to the resolutions made at the 1987 conference of the Islamic countries' foreign ministers in Amman. [passage omitted]

The Saudi side said that Jordanian pilgrims will be well treated. The Saudi side also said that it will notify all the relevant bodies concerned, including the unified office of agents, the institution overseeing the circumambulation of the Kaaba, the guides institution, the vehicles institution, and the processing centers on the roads and borders, so that Jordanian pilgrims will be well treated and their mission facilitated. He added that other concerned parties in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shall also be informed of this. [end recording]

Further Reportage on Militia Weapons Handover

Druze Said Delaying Transfer

NC0605140991 Paris AFP in English 1359 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Beirut, May 6 (AFP)—The Druze militia, which began more than 10 days ago to turn in their arsenal to Syrian troops in line with government demands, have stopped handing in their weapons, reliable sources here said.

The Druzes are unhappy with Christian cabinet members, accusing them of "dragging their feet" on adopting an official document calling for "privileged ties" between Beirut and Damascus, the sources said.

They have also said they have "no faith in the Lebanese Army" which deployed its troops last week in the Druze-dominated al-Shuf district southeast of Beirut.

There has been no immediate confirmation from the Druzes that they stopped turning in their weapons and equipment.

But last week militia sources said the operation which started on April 25 could last a month because of the size of the arsenal involved.

The Druzes, Lebanon's second-largest militia after the Christian Lebanese Forces, obtained most of their weapons from Syria and the Soviet Union and had seized others from the Lebanese Army.

The Lebanese government had asked militias to hand in their weapons and disband by April 30 ahead of the Army's deployment in their sectors.

On Sunday Druze leader Walid Junblatt, also a member of the Syrian-backed government of Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, called for "privileged ties" between Beirut and Damascus.

"And we want it written down that the Syrian army will remain in certain sectors of the (al-Shuf/Druze) mountain because we don't know what can happen in the future, namely because Israel is still in Lebanon," he said.

Israeli troops have been deployed in a self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon since 1985.

The Lebanese Army on Sunday clashed with Palestinian guerrillas near the southern port of Tyre for the second time since troops deployed in the region in February, security sources said.

In Beirut, some 80,000 private and public school teachers began an open-ended strike on Monday for better pay and conditions.

Bank employees and professors at the Lebanese University have been observing a similar strike since Thursday.

Al-Maradah Hands Over Arms

NC0605171191 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1530 GMT 6 May 91

[Marcel Faraj dispatch from Zgharta—recorded]

[Text] In implementation of the Council of Ministers' decision and on the instructions of Sulayman Tony Franjiyah, minister of state, the weapons belonging to the al-Maradah establishment [militia] were handed over to the Lebanese Army at 1630 today. Al-Maradah had handed over weapons belonging to the Lebanese Army on 20 April.

At 1600 today Minister Franjiyah received in his Bnash'i office Brigadier General Michel M'ayki, chairman of the military committee in charge of taking over the militias' weapons; Brig. Gen. Muhammad Jallul, chairman of the branch military committee in the north; Colonel Rashid Afyuni, head of the intelligence apparatus in the north; the officers on the military committee in charge of taking over the weapons; and officers of the northern military command.

The committee then left for the weapons stores and took delivery of the following weapons and ammunition: three 122-mm guns; one Korean-made 122-mm guns; one 130-mm gun; three 57-mm guns; one mobile 57-mm gun; two short barreled 57-mm guns; one 57-mm shoulder gun; two 76-mm guns; three 75-mm mobile guns; two 75-mm guns; two mobile 23-mm double-barrel antiaircraft guns; two mobile four-barrel 14.5-mm antiaircraft guns; one mobile 30-rocket Grad launcher; one [word indistinct] Grad launcher; one 130-mm rocket launcher; one (manuka) rocket launching pad; one RPG-10 launcher; two mobile 12.7-mm machine guns; nine 12.7-mm machine guns; one mobile 106-mm gun; one 106-mm gun with base; two mobile 14.5-mm antiaircraft guns; three 14.5-mm antiaircraft gun; one 160-mm mortar; three 120-mm mortars; 11 82-mm and 60-mm mortars; 11 RPG launchers; 15 7.62-mm machine guns; one (Trio) truck; one Dodge truck; three military Mercedes trucks; one Mercedes truck; three short-chassis jeeps; and five long-chassis jeeps.

In addition, approximately 600 tons of ammunition for these weapons were handed over to the Army.

The chairman of the military committee, Brig. Gen. M'ayki, described this gesture by the al-Maradah establishment as a valuable gift that will increase the Army's weapons and strength.

The committee was accompanied by officials of al-Maradah establishment. Emil Karam spoke on behalf of the establishment, noting that the guarantee is having one army commanded by Gen. Emile Lahhud.

Communists Turn In Part of Weapons

NC0705072091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] The Communist Party yesterday turned over a large quantity of its weapons to the Army in al-Rumaylah. Officers from both sides were present.

The party handed over 20 artillery pieces, including mortars, multi-barrel launchers, six rocket launching pads, a personnel carrier, six military trucks, 30 tons of ammunition, and two SAM-7 rockets.

This is only a portion of the party's weapons; the remainder will be handed over when the Army is deployed in the South and al-Biqa'.

Netherlands Foreign Minister Arrives

JN0505161091 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister of the Netherlands Mr. Hans van den Broek and Mrs. van den Broek arrived in Damascus this afternoon on a two-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. On hand to meet them at Damascus airport were Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Mrs. al- Shar', the chiefs of the Europe Desk and Protocol at the Foreign Ministry, and the Netherlands ambassador and his staff.

Mr. Broek told a SANA correspondent he was glad to be visiting Syria for talks with Mr. al-Shar'. His visit, he added, is to follow up talks by the European Troika delegation held in Damascus two months ago, when the two sides decided to pursue contacts. He stressed that Syria and the EC have an important role to play in the Middle East peace process. He noted that the Netherlands—due to take over the next EC presidency—maintains good relations with Syria.

Received by Al-Asad

JN0505181991 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1830 today Hans van den Broek, Netherlands foreign minister, and his delegation. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the Netherlands ambassador in Damascus were also present.

The conversation dealt with the situation in the region and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Meets Al-Shar'

JN0605140391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 6 May 91

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this morning received Hans van den Broek, Netherlands foreign minister. [passage omitted]

They discussed aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question, as well as efforts to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the region based on international legitimacy and the pertinent UN resolutions. Their viewpoints were identical with regard to the importance of the Euroeapn participation in the peace conference on the Middle East.

Hans van den Broek extended an official invitation on behalf of the European Community to Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' to hold talks with the European foreign ministers as soon as possible.

Hans van den Broek, Netherlands foreign minister, his wife, and the accompanying delegation departed Damascus today following a two-day visit to Syria, during which he met with President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted]

Expresses 'Satisfaction'

JN0605171391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek, his wife, and the accompanying delegation departed Damascus today following a two-day visit to Syria, during which he met with President Hafiz al-Asad. He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and his wife; the directors of the Europe and Protocol Departments in the Foreign Ministry; the Netherlands ambassador in Damascus; and the embassy staff.

In a predeparture statement, van den Broek expressed his great satisfaction with the results of his talks in Damascus.

He said it is useful for both sides to frankly and sincerely discuss the horizons of the peace process.

He added: I am very grateful because President Hafiz al-Asad and my colleague al-Shar' have granted me a great deal of their time to discuss these issues in depth. As you know, the Netherlands will soon take over the next European Community presidency. What we have heard here will help us a great deal in contributing to the peace process. We have committed ourselves to continuing our discussions, which I think were useful for both sides.

For his part, al-Shar' answered the questions of journalists accompanying the Netherlands foreign minister. He said: Syria adheres to holding a peace conference on the Middle East to implement international legitimacy and UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Al-Shar' added that it is in the interest of all parties concerned about establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region to see that the peace conference continues, because limiting it to an opening session will not help the parties pursue discussions in case any obstacles were to emerge.

Responding to a question on the European Community's role, al- Shar' stressed Syria's position in support of European participation in the peace conference. He described the UN role as important since it is a point of reference that helps the parties interpret the UN Security Council resolutions within international legitimacy.

In regard to optimism over holding a peace conference, al-Shar' said that official Israeli statements are evidence that Israel neither wants peace in the region nor want the peace process to begin. Moreover, Israel does not want a genuine peace conference; neither does it want the United Nations or the European Community to participate in the peace conference. Rather, Israel would do anything to hinder the peace process.

Regarding the U.S. role on peace in the region, al-Shar' said: Syria considers the U.S. efforts important at this stage of the peace process.

Ba'th Party, WPK Delegations Open Talks

JN0405164891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] Damascus—Talks began this morning between the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party delegation led by comrade Mut'ib Shinan, member of the Ba'th Party National Command; and the North Korean Workers' Party [WPK] led by comrade Choe Tae-pok, candidate member of the political bureau and secretary of the WPK Central Committee. Members of both delegations attended.

The talks dealt with the existing cooperation between the two friendly parties and ways of implementing the program approved in the past by the two parties. They discussed the work of both parties' in Syria and the DPRK to implement the course of their program. They also touched on postwar political developments in the Arab region and East Asia, as well as the two parties' positions on them.

Comrade Shinan gave a briefing on the achievements and changes that have taken place in Syria under the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and its secretary general, Comrade Hafiz al-Asad.

For his part, Comrade Choe Tae-pok praised the strong relations between the two friendly parties and peoples, which serve their mutual interests. He also referred to developments in the DPRK and the relationship between his country and his party compared with that of other parties and countries in the world.

Delegation Meets With Khaddam

JN0505182191 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1727 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Damascus, 5 May (SANA)—Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received at 1000 today the DPRK delegation led by Choe Tae-pok, candidate member of the Workers Party of Korea Political Bureau and secretary of the Central Committee.

Conversation revolved around the situation in the two Koreas, the international conditions, the situation in the Middle East, and the bilateral relations.

Khaddam Receives Lebanon's Prime Minister

JN0605053691 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] At 1730 today Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Lebanon's House Speaker Husayn al-Husayni and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami. They were joined later by Syrian Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi. The meeting considered the situation in Lebanon, the execution of the national accord document, and the establishment of security and stability in the country.

Al-Shar' Receives Saudi Envoy With Message

JN0405113291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has received a message from His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister of Saudi Arabia. (Isma'il Suri), assistant undersecretary at the Saudi Foreign Ministry, conveyed the message to al-Shar' during a meeting today. The message deals with coordination and consultations on a number of Arab issues.

Daily Calls for International Pressure on Israel

JN0705074491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 7 May 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Solution Lies in Israel's Submission," the newspaper TISHRIN says: Israeli Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon has announced the establishment of a third Jewish settlement in less than a month near the city of Hebron in the occupied West Bank. This decision coincides with the beginning of the Soviet foreign minister's tour in the region. The enemy government had earlier timed the establishment of two settlements with the U.S. secretary of state's third tour of the Middle East. It is very clear that the objective of these Zionist practices is to foil the two world superpowers' efforts, especially since Secretary Baker and Minister Bessmertnykh had agreed on the bases of a just solution, particularly the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions No. 242 and 338 and the exchange of land for peace within the framework of a conference in which the parties concerned, Washington and Moscow, will participate.

TISHRIN adds: Although U.S.-Israeli relations are not at their best, and the proof is that U.S. officials refused to receive Sharon, and Israel's continuation of settling Jewish immigrants in the occupied territories. [sentence as heard] The relevant question is will Israel be able to continue to defy the world and reject international resolutions?

Concluding, the paper says: We do not believe the international community will evade its responsibilities as a result of Israel's intransigence and its aggressive and expansionist scheme. Nor do we believe that President Bush will go back on his commitment to a just and comprehensive peace in the region based on UN Security Council resolutions. It is natural that Israel should submit to the voice of right and justice. The international community has sufficient elements of pressure to force Israel to respect its will and to stop aggression.

Commentary on Israeli Obstruction of Peace Efforts

JN0405151391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 4 May 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Unconcerned by an international yearning for a true Middle East settlement and a fair solution to the Palestinian people's problem, the enemy Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has gone out of his way to undo the precious little progress James Baker made in his three tours of the region. Shamir has thrust the burden of making nonbinding Israeli concessions on his Foreign Minister David Levi. While the world looked on with satisfaction as the Lebanese state reasserted itself and deployed its regular army throughout the country, and with the militia surrendering their weapons to the Lebanese Government, Shamir sent his aircraft to hit Lebanese and Palestinian refugee targets. In the meantime, Israeli officials were calling into question the seriousness of the disbandment of Lebanese militias, emphasizing that Israel will keep up its iron-fist terroristic tactics against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.

Obviously Shamir and other Israeli leaders do not want peace or stability to prevail in the Middle East. Peace would require international guarantees, U.S. commitments, and clearly defined boundaries for the Zionist entity. Israel wants open borders amenable to adjustment, alteration, and expansion to promote the greater Israel plan; hence the deliberate sabotage of the Middle East peace process and Secretary Baker's efforts; hence Israel's ferverish effort to forestall a redeployment of the Lebanese Army in the south so as to keep the central government vulnerable to storms, internal sedition, and rebellion. Israeli officials seem to think that it is possible to trick the international community into shelving a Middle East settlement until the next presidential election in the United States, in the hope that the outcome would favor a reversion to unconcern and blind support for Zionist policies.

Israeli officials are each playing a designated role, with Foreign Minister David Levi stating he is in favor of a peace conference with a high profile and UN and EC participation, and then Shamir subsequently comes out against Levi's presumed concessions. In the meantime, Sharon and other Israeli ministers are taking a hard line on settlement activity and building new outposts. Shamir never misses a chance to declare that the occupied Golan Heights will remain an integral part of Israel. The Israeli prime minister said recently that he fails to make sense of Syrian policies or to fathom its intentions. As far as Palestinian representation at a peace conference, Shamir seems to want to be their spokesman himself. Such Israeli positions not only mark a belittlement of the international community and the United States, but they are also symptomatic of a disdain for a fair peace and a resolve to aggress and expand. Secretary Baker, whose trip to Israel has produced next to nothing, was soon to discover that even this little bit was undone by Shamir, who told the U.S. diplomat that his peace mission was a virtual waste of time. Surely, with Israel placing obstacles in the path of peace, the American diplomat's endeavours are a waste of time—unless, of course, the United States decides to act tough and the international community assumes its responsibilities as it did during the Gulf war. Only then will Israel think twice before flying in the face of the will of the international community.

It is especially important that the U.S. Administration and George Bush impress on Zionist officials an irreversible commitment to a fair and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. It is equally important that Israeli officials be made to realize that the international community stands by Lebanon's unification effort, and that they have to comply with Security Council Resolution 425 stipulating Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the central Beirut government taking charge of security on its soil. Further, the international community needs to stress that there can no longer be any procrastination on Palestinian rights, that Middle East security is connected to global security, that international law should be invoked uniformly throughout the world, and that it is high time Israel's obstructionism was held in check.

We would tell Shamir, though, that Syria is interested in a fair and comprehensive peace where occupation, coercion, injustice, and aggression have no place. Syria is pursuing the kind of peace settlement whereby the Palestinians regain their rights and exercise self-determination, and the Lebanese recover their territory and the southern Lebanese rejoin their homeland. Syria wants the kind of peace settlement under which the Golan Heights reverts to Syrian sovereignty, and the Heights population exercises its inalienable rights as citizens of Syria. Syria is interested in a settlement predicated on UN resolutions—and there can be no bargaining over these.

Afghanistan

Cooperation Accords Signed With Soviet Province

LD0605111391 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0450 6 May 91

[Text] Kabul, May 5, BAKHTAR—Protocol of cooperation between ministers of commerce, agriculture, constructional affairs, water and power and transport of RA [Republic of Afghanistan] with Altay state of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, was concluded in Kabul today.

Under these protocol, the Altay province of RSFSR will [word indistinct] Afghanistan in the sphere of the delivery of wood, machinery, road construction, repair of Torghundi road, digging of deep well, spare parts, rehabilitation and repair of water supply canal to the concerned ministry of the RA.

According to another report, the delegation signed today protocols of commercial cooperation with some Afghan national traders in Kabul.

Under the protocol, the Altay province of RSFSR cooperates with the Afghan entrepreneurs in the establishment of the factory of plastic foodwear, wool process factory, macaroni production factory and the set-up of Afghan stores in Altay Province.

Mujahidin said To Regain Lowgar Highway

BK0705034091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, the mujahidin have regained control over the Kabul-Lowgar highway following fierce fighting. More than 50 Kabul regime troops have been killed and the mujahidin have seized a large quantity of heavy weapons. Reports say the Kabul regime's air force is also bombing the Khowst garrison liberated by mujahidin recently. The Kabul regime has also launched a Scud missile on Khowst.

Rebels Reportedly Kill 78 Kabul Troops in Herat

BK0705041391 Lahore THE NATION in English 5 May 91 p IV

["From Our Correspondent"]

[Text] Peshawar—Seventy-eight Kabul troops were killed after Mujahidin launched fresh operations in various parts of Herat Province, according to a media report. In one of the attacks on the regime posts on the highway between Herat and Towraghondi one military post of Kabul forces was completely destroyed.

The report said that the Mujahidin launched a long range attack over the Headquarter of Regime forces in Herat city. Mujahidin claimed that the Joint Chief of the Kabul Regime Forces and head of the Communications were killed.

Soviet POW's Allegedly Die in Rebel Custody

BK0705095791 Hong Kong AFP in English 0952 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, May 7 (AFP)—Twenty-one Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) have died recently in Afghan mujahidin custody as a hepatitis epidemic lashed their camps, informed sources said here Tuesday.

The sources said the 21 POWs died over the past four months. "They were all suffering from jaundice," a reliable source who did not wish to be named said.

Another informed resistance source, confirming the hepatitis epidemic, said the exact casualty figure could not be immediately confirmed as "the Soviets are lodged in different camps" at secret resistance hideouts.

An unspecified number of Red Army troops were captured by the mujahidin guerrillas during the 10-year Soviet Army deployment in Afghanistan in support of the pro-Moscow regime in Kabul.

After the Soviet Union ended the withdrawal of its estimated 112,000 troops from Afghanistan in February 1989, Moscow said some 13,000 of its soldiers and officers had been killed in the past decade of fighting.

The Soviet Union has listed more than 300 soldiers as missing but the resistance sources, without giving exact figures, said the number of prisoners could be higher.

Several groups are holding the Soviet POWs but a majority of them are said to be in the custody of the Hezb-e Eslami faction led by fundamentalist resistance leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.

A local daily, THE FRONTIER POST, said other POWs were suffering from hepatitis, a sometimes fatal inflammation of the liver, but had been provided with necessary medical care.

But the report said the Soviets, disturbed by the deaths of their comrades, were refusing the food and medicine given them by mujahidin doctors. Resistance sources were unwilling to comment.

Since the Soviet withdrawal, a private delegation representing the POWs' mothers and Soviet intellectuals has twice visited Pakistan for talks with resistance leaders. But the release of the POWs has been pending Moscow's acceptance of certain mujahidin demands.

Among its conditions, the Pakistan-based seven-party resistance has demanded the release of thousands of mujahidin guerrillas captured by Soviet and Afghan Government troops during the war.

Bangladesh

Fuel Rationed as Cyclone Cripples Supplies

BK0605161891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1332 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Dhaka, May 6 (AFP)—The Bangladesh Government introduced fuel rationing in the capital Monday following reports that two oil tankers had sunk and the country's only refinery was damaged in last week's cyclone.

The authorities said motorists could buy 10 litres (two gallons) daily following a confirmation that Bangladesh's only refinery in Chittagong had stopped production after the cyclone smashed its equipment. No restrictions were placed on the sale of diesel.

Two tankers each carrying 500 tonnes of fuel from the southeastern port city to Dhaka also capsized during the April 29 cyclone which has killed 126,000 people by official count and devastated 16 of the country's 64 districts.

Other tankers were unable to chart a course as scores of vessels sunk by the cyclone littered rivers connecting Chittagong and Dhaka, Petroleum Ministry officials said at the weekend.

They said the country's fuel reserves were being used to meet daily demands, adding it would be some time before the refinery, which had an annual production capacity of 150,000 tonnes, would be operating again.

Dhaka's daily consumption of fuel is between 200,000 and 300,000 litres and the city accounts for almost 70 per cent of all cars in the country.

India, France To Provide More Relief Aid

BK0605164891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1552 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Dhaka, May 6 (AFP)—India and France announced Monday that they would provide more direct relief aid to Bangladesh in the aftermath of last week's catastrophic cyclone.

In a statement, Indian diplomats here said two Indian Air Force (IAF) transport planes carrying ten tonnes of supplies for the local chapter of the Red Crescent Society would arrive Tuesday [7 May].

Meanwhile, French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Assistance Bernard Kouchner, describing the cyclone as a "deep tragedy," said France is ready to send medicines and other aid.

Mr. Kouchner noted that France had already sent one tonne of medicine and 20,000 tonnes of wheat and baby foods to the cyclone victims.

The European Commmunity, of which France is a member, has also pledged 12 million dollars.

The Indian officials said more IAF planes carrying relief aid are expected to arrive later in the week.

India had previously donated 700,000 dollars worth of relief supplies to its neighbor, and three of its helicopters, along with two from Pakistan, are already ferrying relief supplies from Dhaka to hard-hit coastal areas.

The official death toll from the cyclone was nearing 126,000, but some unofficial estimates said it could yet go above 200,000, once the missing are accounted for.

The Bangladesh Government said it has so far received 150 million dollars in aid pledges, including 106 million dollars from Saudi Arabia, four million dollars from Pakistan, two million dollars from the United States and 1.6 million dollars from Australia.

Also, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, which includes Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as well as Bangladesh, has promised a contribution from its 250,000 tonne food stockpile.

Inquiry on Cyclone-Damaged Planes, Ships

BK0705013091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1843 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Dhaka, May 6 (AFP)—A Bangladesh Government court of inquiry is to investigate the cause of damage to several military aircraft and naval vessels in the southeastern port of Chittagong, according to an official announcement carried Monday by the official BSS [BANGLADESH NEWS AGENCY] news agency.

The four-member court headed by Major General Nurul Huq will start Tuesday the inquiry which was ordered by Acting President Shahabuddin Ahmed, who is also the supreme commander of Bangladeshi Armed Forces.

The move followed recent press reports here saying that last week's killer cyclone damaged or destroyed several Air Force planes and naval vessels at their bases in Chittagong.

The Defence Ministry declined to comment, but local newspapers and opposition politicians have said some 40 military aircraft, including fighters, were damaged by the storm, which also hit or sunk nine naval vessels.

The cyclone, Bangladesh's worst in decades, killed more than 126,000 people.

Refuelling Facilities for Foreign Planes Cut

BK0705093591 Hong Kong AFP in English 0930 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Dhaka, May 7 (AFP)—The government has withdrawn refuelling facilities for foreign aircraft, saying Bangladesh's petroleum supplies have been hit by a giant cyclone which also crippled its only refinery, officials said Tuesday.

The Petroleum Ministry, which slapped the ban Monday at the same time as introducing petrol rationing for vehicles, said international passenger jets flying via Dhaka will not be exempt from the restrictions as its supplies were seriously dislocated.

Airports will however continue to fuel international transports bringing relief materials for victims of the April 29 disaster, planes carrying VIPs and aircraft belonging to the state-owned Bangladesh Biman Airline, they said.

The withdrawal of refulling facilities followed restrictions on the sale of petrol in the national capital after the ministry reported losses of two of its 500-tonne oil tankers en route to Dhaka during the cyclone.

The country's main refinery, with an annual production capacity of 150,000 tonnes, was also damaged in Chittagong Port City by the cyclone which has claimed at least 126,000 lives.

Ten international airlines, including Aeroflot, British Airways, Indian Airlines, Pakistan International Airlines, Emirates and Gulf Air, operate daily to or from Bangladesh.

India

Border Firing 'To Provide Cover' for Militants

BK0605153291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, 66 Pakistan-trained militants were killed in an encounter with the security forces while they were trying to cross the actual line of control yesterday in the Kupwara sector. The Kupwara sector had been subjected to firing by artillery mortars and small arms from across the border during the last four days. The purpose of the firing was to provide cover to the Pakistan-trained militants to enable them to cross the line of actual control. According to official sources this is the first major attempt by the Pakistan-trained militants to infiltrate into Kashmir this year.

Meanwhile in Srinagar, militants shot dead Mr. Sheikh Saddiq, a cousin of former chief minister, Dr. Faroqq Abdullah, at his residence at Nagin last night.

Intervention for Fair Elections Urged in Bihar

BK0605140091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] The Bihar units of the Congress-I and the Samajwadi Janata Party [SJP] have urged the president, Mr. Venkataraman, and the chief election commissioner to intervene immediately in the state to ensure a free and fair election. The state Congress-I chief whip, Mr. Kamalnath Singh Thakur, and the SGP campaign committee president, Mr. P.K. Sinha, urged this in separate letters to the president and the chief election commissioner. They cited disturbances in the public meeting of AICC-I [All-India Congress Committee-I] Chief Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader Mr. L. K. Advani in support of their demands.

Meanwhile, the chief minister, Mr. Lalu Prasad, has alleged that the Congress-I, the BJP, and the Samajwadi Janata Party are conspiring against his government out of sheer frustration. He told PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA] today that he is prepared to face elections even if these are held by deploying the Army in the state.

BJP President Gives Election Address

BK0605162991 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 6 May 91

[Election broadcast by Bharatiya Janata Party President Murli Manohar Joshi, place not given—recorded]

[Text] Dear countrymen, once again the people of India have been called upon to perform their democratic obligation—to choose their members of parliament and elect a government of their choice. But this is an election with a difference.

For more than 40 years, it was the Congress that was unquestionably the dominant party. It was between the Congress and the non-Congress. Sometimes, as in 1977, the non-Congress parties came together. On other occasions, they fought separately or had seat adjustments. The congress is no longer the dominant party enjoying unquestioned sway throughout the country. In Tamil Nadu, it is the junior partner of the AIDMK [All-India Anna-Dravida Munnetra Kazagham]. In Kerala, it is a constituent of the UDF [United Democratic Front] that includes the Muslim League, and in Gujarat, it has seat adjustments with a breakaway faction of the Janata Dal-S.

The second significant development has been the emergence of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] as an alternative party of government contesting 479 seats and supporting 18 others throughout India. The BJP has revolutionalized public life through its principles and nationalistic policies.

In Kashmir, the situation is tragic. Not only is the Indian flag burnt publicly as a matter of routine in the Kashmir valley, but the entire Hindu population has been driven out from their homes and hearths. This colossal human tragedy—the tragedy of people becoming refugees in their own country—appears to have left our government and political parties quite unmoved. Is it legitimate, we ask the people of India, that there should be a separate constitution for one state [Kashmir]. The BJP is committed to the speedy end of the distortions that Article 370 has created. But the broader issue is in essence more fundamental that concerns our national identity.

It is only the BJP that repudiates the contention that India is a mere collection of diverse nationalities, castes, communities, and religions. The BJP stands for Ram [Hindu god], roti [bread] and insaaf [justice]. Ram stands for freedom from fear, roti for freedom from want, and insaaf for freedom from discrimination. This election is in fact about vision.

India is emotionally on the verge of disintegration because short-sighted leaders pit caste against caste and religion against religion. Your choice will be critical. You have over the years tried the alternatives. Now I appeal to you give the BJP a chance for the sake of unity, for the sake of India and for your sake and your children's sake. Throw out the big (?tenders) into the dustbins of history. Let India make a fresh beginning. Let us be proud to say that we are Indians, that we believe in Indian nationalism. Vande Mataram [Hail Mother India].

BJP Accuses Other Parties of Communalism

BK0705041291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, has charged the Janata Dal and the Congress-I for trying to divide the country on communal lines for political gains. Addressing a public meeting in Rishikesh, he said his party favors smaller states for faster development.

Shekhar: Congress-I 'Creating Trouble'

BK0705075691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] The Samajwadi Janata Party leader, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, participating in several meetings in Maharashtra charged the Congress-I with creating trouble in Punjab, Kashmir, and Assam.

Faction To Probe Akali Chief's Irregularities

BK0405130091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] In Punjab, a faction of the Akali Dal-Mann led by Mr. Harcharan Singh Rhode has set up a committee to probe the alleged irregularities committed by Mr. Simranjit Singh Mann in the distribution of party tickets [for contesting elections]. This was decided at a meeting of the faction in Ludhiana today. It was attended by 18 members of the working committee and the district Jathedars [leaders]. Mr. Harcharan Singh Rhode had resigned from the general secretary's post and also from the party parliamentary board a few days ago in protest against the alleged irregularities in the distribution of tickets.

Meanwhile, the All-India Sikh Students Federation in a statement in Amritsar said it will have seat adjustments with like-minded parties in the Punjab assembly and Lok Sabha elections.

Gandhi Espouses Stability Platform

BK0505083091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1606 GMT 4 May 91

[Congress-I President Rajiv Gandhi's 4 May election address; place not given—recorded]

[Text] Friends, many emotions arise in me as I speak to you tonight, distressed at the difficulties you have had to go through, embarrassment that some politicians have done over the last 18 months. I am saddened at the growing tide of violence and destruction, yet I am glad to have this opportunity to speak to you once again.

I ask you in all humility to vote for the Indian National Congress. From you, my elders, I seek blessings; from you, my brothers and sisters, I seek support. In 1984, you overwhelmed me with your trust. I worked to fulfill that trust. Much was accomplished from 1985 to 1989. India stepped moving forward. In the 1989 elections, the Congress emerged as the largest party, but we did not form a government because we felt there was no clear mandate. However, an alliance which together polled less votes than the Congress formed the government. And what a mess they had left behind! The allegations they made proved baseless, just as the promises they made had turned out to be hollow. Five years of achievement and initiative were undone in a matter of months. Crisis increased as never before; the economy is in shambles; Indians have been set against Indians; violence and terrorism has intensified; law and order has broken down; the secular heritage of our civilization is under attack. All this needs to be reversed. It can be reversed. It requires a government that is stable, a government that is firm and resolute, a government that has a vision of the future. It is a political party which represents all sections of our diverse society, a political party which unites, a political party which has the concern and the capacity to rise above narrow and parochial interests, a political party that builds the country.

Friends, only the Congress is that party. Our manifesto is already before you. It clearly spells out our plan of action. Our immediate priority will be to bring down prices. Availability of essential commodities will be ensured. One crore Indians will be found new jobs every year. That is the magnitude of the challenge ahead. Massive housing programs will be started. The welfare of our kisans [farmers], khet mazdoor [farm laborers], and workers will continue to remain uppermost in our minds. We will cut controls that harass you and controls that restrict growth and initiative. Delays in courts will be minimized and procedures simplified. Banks will be made more efficient; the law and order administration will be modernized. Education will be our particular concern. We will ensure that scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes, minorities, women, and the economically weak are provided with proper education and vocational training. We will place the highest emphasis on programs and schemes to improve the economic and social status of women. We promise the youth of our country a new deal. May I recall that it was the Congress that lowered the voting age to 18? To place power in your hands, we will revive the panchayati raj [local administration] institutions in the rural areas and the nagarpalika [municipal] bodies in the urban areas by giving them more power. India's social fabric has been put under severe stress; we will provide the soothing touch. We will restore India's image and prestige in the world.

Friends, the experience of non-Congress government proves the indispensability of a strong, stable, and forward-looking government at the center. Everything else flows from this. India's experience clearly shows that political instability leads to economic decay and social turmoil. Only the Congress has an all-India presence. Only the Congress can provide stability. Only the Congress can restore trust and amity among people of different religions and castes. I have nursed a dream—a dream of a great Indian people marching toward their destiny. I have dream of an India that excels the world, that excels itself. Together, we can fulfill that dream. We once again appeal for your support. Give us another opportunity to get on with the unfinished task of nation building. Thank you. Jai Hind [Hail India].

Panther's Party Pledges To Free Kashmir

BK0305164091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 3 May 91

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir Panther's Party has pledged to liberate those parts of Kashmir, including the Gilgit region, which are now occupied by Pakistan. The party's election manifesto released in New Delhi today by its president, Mr. Bhim Singh, criticizes the nonholding of elections in the state and polls for giving refugee status to migrants from the valley.

Replying to a question, Mr. Bhim Singh said that peace cannot be restored in Jammu and Kashmir without the People's Army getting into operation against forces backed by Pakistan.

Trade Group on 'Unfortunate' U.S. Decision

BK0405054091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] The Indo-American Chambers of Commerce, the IACC, has described as unfortunate the U.S. decision to make Super 301 applicable to India and suggested dialogue instead of resorting to unilateral decision with possible retaliation. Addressing a news conference in Bombay, the IACC president, Mr. M.K. Modi, said the decision was unwarranted especially when multilateral efforts are on at the Uruguay round of GATT talks.

66 'Pakistan-Trained Militants' Killed on Border

BK0605135891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, 66 Pakistan-trained militants were killed in an encounter with the security forces while they were trying to cross the actual line of control yesterday in the Tithwal sector. According to first reports reaching New Delhi, three militants have been apprehended and the security forces have recovered 66 AK-47 rifles, five machine guns, four rocket launchers, nine pistols and revolvers, 8,000 rounds of ammunition and some grenades.

70 Tons of Relief Supplies for Cyclone Victims

BK0705052491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] India is to give 70 tons of relief materials for the cyclone-hit victims in the south of Bangladesh. An Indian High Commission spokesman has said in Dhaka that three Indian helicopters are now flying relief materials to the affected islands. Two air force aircraft are likely to reach Dhaka today with 10 tons of relief materials. More flights of IAF [Indian Air Force] aircraft have been scheduled during this week to carry relief supplies to Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, relief activities in the cyclone-hit areas in the South have been geared up. The Bangladesh Navy has deployed 13 of its vessels to carry relief supplies across the rough seas to the affected areas. Aircraft and helicopters carried out 83 sorties till yesterday, dropping 136 tons of materials to the 16 affected districts. Relief operations were hampered yesterday by a fresh storm and bad weather with the apprehension of another gale hitting the southern region. The Bangladesh Government's announcement yesterday that the Chittagong Port will be partially opened has given a further boost to relief operations.
on

* Election Plan Mapped Out

91AS0594A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 8 Feb 91 pp 1,10

[Article: "Convention Gives Election Direction to BJP"]

[Text] Jaipur, 5 February—The direction that the BJP is going to take was clear in its 5th convention. The party wants to keep the Ayodhya Andolan, which created a pro-BJP atmosphere, alive until the next elections. At the same time, it has decided to take an offensive, instead of the former defensive, attitude about the issue of factionalism.

The tools the BJP will use to rise during this era of national uncertainty include putting other parties on trial over the issues related to distorted secularism and national unity, blaming the Congress-I and other parties that emerged from it for all political misadministration and the resulting evils and assuring of providing a stable government, unitarian humanism, establishing a separate identity for Indian culture and nationalism, and providing bread along with the name of Rama.

The BJP appears to have followed the Jana Sangh path in this convention. It counted the failures of communism, socialism, and capitalism and emphasized unitarian humanism. The party has decided that its political thought, attitude, and direction will depend on this principle alone. For this reason, they had the portraits of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji, founder of Jana Sangh, and Pandit Dindayal Upadhyaye, the originator of unitarian humanism. Por traits of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, and Jaiprakash Narayan were missing.

Electing Murli Manohar Joshi the party chairman appears to be the part of the plan to put the party on this path. Dr. Joshi expressed his desire to expand the top leadership of the party. Until now, Atal Bihari Bajpai, Lalkarishan Advani, and Vijyaraje Scindia were decisive forces. The party policymakers have added the name of Dr. Joshi to this list. Dr. Joshi's usefulness in spreading the policy within the coalition and outside of it has been an important factor in his selection.

Several new agenda items were added keeping in view the new political demands on the party. This include a week-long campaign to solve the Punjab issue by ginning on the Martyr Bhagat Singh Day, celebrating a social equality day in April on the birthday of Bhimrao Ambedakar, celebrating farmers' fortnight in May, and national unity fortnight in June. The active participation of the party in the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's demonstration at the Parliament was decided because of political benefits for the party and for improving morale of party members.

The BJP is not in any position to get out of the temple issue that had helped it to gain confidence to form a government at the center. According to Atal Bihari Bajpai, it is facing the dilemma of how deeply a political party should be involved in a religious issue. Despite all the criticisms over this issue, this party cannot suppress its greed to reap political benefits from the temple issue.

The presence of Rashtariya Sawyamsewak Sangh's political heavyweight Bhaurao Devras, Vishwa Hindu Parishad's leader Sahyogi Brahamdev, and state leader Lakshman Singh in the convention shows increasing interest of the coalition in the BJP. In order to accelerate the propaganda of their philosophy, the party issued three books during the convention. These books are about false secularism versus nationalism, Dr. Ambedakar, and Kashmir. The party also decided to establish kamal clubs in the style of fence clubs in the cities and kamal international clubs for establishing its international identity. The idea to establish a shadow cabinet was also raised in this convention.

The eagerness for increasing party activities in the convention and in the national working committee was equally correlated to the speed with which the BJP saw the increase in its popular support. It was also evident that the party was trying to improve the confidence of the people that it was going to form government at the center and also its capability to assume this responsibility. Identifying various legislators as experts in various areas and forming special committees on social, political, economic, and diplomacy were also part of this process. Actually, the party is worried if it would perform as expected when the great responsibility of governing the nation is given to it.

The BJP is preparing for the elections with the knowledge that all parties will be united against it this time and not against the Congress-I like in the last elections. It hopes that the elections will create an atmosphere that would help it get most of the anti-Congress-I votes. It believes that it needs only about 20 percent of the votes to win the government at the center, and it is not an impossible feat.

However, the BJP could not raise any social or economic slogan in the convention. It could not show its readiness to make the burning question of inflation, which is the main cause of concern for the people, its election issue.

* Election Issues Chosen

91AS0594B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi
4 Feb 91 pp 1,9

[Article by Hari Shankar Vyas: "BJP Has Moved Beyond The Mandir to Other Topics"]

Jaipur, 3 February—The Fifth National Convention of the BJP focused on five issues. First, increased insistence on following Pandit Dindayal Upadhyaye's humanism as philosophic base. Second, replacing Rama with Kashmir which means trying to involve the party in political rather than religious issues. Third, decision to gain majority Lok Sabha seats in the elections as a single party. Fourth, opening dialogue on Nehru's economic model. Fifth, worry about making the coalition effective. It goes without saying that all these issues are tied to the convention call that it is time for moving from the rose city of Jaipur to Delhi's Red Fort.

The party leadership's move to make Kashmir the major political issue is important. Lalkarishan Advani talked about two programs in his last speech as the chairman. While appealing to cooperate with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in its 4 April demonstration at the Lok Sabha, he mentioned the martyrdom of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji. He also encouraged the party members to show up in Srinagar to raise the tri-color flag there on 27 June. The way Lalkarishan Advani brought up the Kashmir issue after raising slogans about Ram Janambhumi campaign, religion, those who care for Hindu interests, and the party philosophy, indicates that the party leadership is worried about [the lack of] political issues covered by this political party. The party wants to break away from its identity as a religious party because of its association with the Ram Janambhumi issue.

According to a veteran member of the party's working committee, the popular support this party has gained because of the Ram Janambhumi campaign is very stable. During the last 4 or 5 months, every support group that joined the party has become its permanent part just like the sand that goes into the ocean becomes its base. V.P. Singh's support was transferred to it because of the Mandal issue and the BJP also got a solid support because of the Mandir campaign. Regardless of the timing of the elections, these two support sources will help the BJP. However, it is imperative that the party is involved in political issues for its political identity in order to manipulate the present development . How long can a political party survive on making a religious issue such as Ram Janambhumi its focal point? After starting the debate on false secularism and minority issues, the party should start talking about broad national issues which could distinguish its image. If hundreds of thousands of people march on Srinagar for raising the Indian flag there on 27 June, then the party would be responsible for making Article 370 as the most heated topic for political debate.

The possibility of postponement of the elections is also playing a role in the BJP strategy. Lalkarishan Advani had made it clear in the national working committee meeting and in his convention speech that the elections were not going to be held soon. He had said that the party should be psychologically prepared for both situations—immediate elections that could take place this year, or elections in 1994 which would give it a long period for election campaign. The decision to hold the elections soon or not to hold elections lies with the Congress-I Party. The Congress-I Party is especially worried about postponing the elections. The elections can be held three years later as scheduled. The BJP leadership has reviewed all this and is considering opening debates on such political issues as Kashmir and Punjab and economic issue as the Nehru model.

The BJP leadership is confident about controlling any political debate and facing any situation. Mr. Advani said in his opening speech that one benefit the party had was the change in people's attitude toward the party during the last 5 years. He said that,"both our supporters and critics do not consider the BJP a common party any more and it has gained an important place in national politics. Our supporters hope that soon we will raise the saffron flag in Delhi and the critics are expressing the fear that soon the saffron flag will be everywhere in the country." He further said, "this party is not going to just react on the issues raised by the ruling party. The BJP is making a list of issues for political debate. All other parties are standing trial and clarifying their stands on the false secularism and minorities."

The party is confidently forming an outline of activities that include getting the people excited about the Kashmir and other popular issues. The BJP is expecting to increase its popularity by having hundreds of thousands of people demonstrating in front of the Parliament and by the campaign on Srinagar in June.

The BJP believes that the economy will keep getting worse. This is the reason why the new Chairman Murli Manohar Joshi has declared that the debate on economy is more important than politics. He has raised some questions. Is the Nehru economic model realistic for India's economic growth? Should we not evaluate our economic policy keeping in view all the changes occurring in the world? However, the party did not involve itself in socialism versus capitalism in response to these questions. Every leader criticized the public sector industries and the socialist model in his speech in the Jaipur convention. Open economy was advocated, however, the capitalist economy was not fully endorsed. The leaders were hesitant in openly endorsing one kind of economic philosophy. This hesitancy was covered with unitarian humanism. Dindayal Upadhyaye's humanism model was repeatedly discussed as an all-embracing model.

In the Fifth Convention at Jaipur, the influence of Dindayal Upadhyaye's unitarian humanism model was everywhere. The convention site was called "Ekatamta Nagar" [Unitarian City]. The stage only had portraits of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji and Dindayal Upadhyaye. Dindayal Upadhyay's statue was also beside the stage. Lalkarishan Advani had introduced the new chairman Murli Manohar Joshi as a staunch unitarian humanist. Dr. Joshi did not leave any stone unturned in his effort to prove the timeliness of this philosophy in his 24-page speech.

Adoption of the unitarian humanism as a philosophic base and electing Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi as their chairman clearly indicate that the BJP is returning to its Jana Sangh days. Many efforts were made to make the convention efficient and well-organized. The average age of BJP leaders is 65 years. There was a lot of discussions about reducing this average, bringing in younger, new faces in the working committee and the central leadership, electing a general secretary of the coalition, and making the BJP state governments more responsible for the party. Lalkarishan Advani continued to be a major force in the convention even after relinquishing the chairmanship. The delegates recognized his accomplishments during the last 5 years in their own way. The superleader of this convention was really Lalkarishan Advani.

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* Singh Said To Living Politics of Past

91AS0654B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 17 Feb 91 pp 1, 8

[Article by Nirja Chaudhury: "Today's V.P. Reminds One of the Indira Gandhi of 20 years Ago"]

[Text] New Delhi, 17 Feb. After seeing V.P. Singh during the Puri Conference, one remembers Indira Gandhi of 1971. The same rhetoric about radical changes and preparations to settle with the party bosses could be heard.

Indira Gandhi's slogan in 1971 was, "Eradicate poverty." In 1991, V.P. Singh's slogan is, "Equality." In order to get even with the party syndicate and to present herself as a benefactor of the poor, she nationalized the banks and eliminated privy purses. Mr. Singh is using the Mandal Report to get even with Devilal and has proposed a 60 percent reservation quota for the backward sects, minorities, scheduled castes and tribes to put the other leaders of the party in their proper place.

Those days of 1987-1988 when V.P. Singh was getting various leaders and groups united to form the Janata Dal are long gone now. The [former] king of Manda has a lot more self-confidence and is better prepared to face his critics. Mrs. Indira Gandhi had transformed her image from a mute doll to the fighting goddess Durga. At Puri, a line was drawn between the old and the new V.P. Singh.

It was the Mr. Clean image of V.P. Singh that had attracted the middle class to him during 1987-89 and catapulted him into government. He is changing his image to that of social reformer and is attracting the support of a totally different group of people.

V.P. Singh has demonstrated his expertise in practical politics. He has now passed the equation of the AJGAR [coalition of lower castes—Ahir, Jat, Gujar, Rajput]. This equation was in effect during the 1989 elections. Mr. Singh has thrown his net on a new area and is way ahead of the Mandal circle. He is making the Muslims, backward sects, Harijans, scheduled tribes, and women his new social support base under the slogan of equality. The main slogan in Puri was not Mandal; it was political, economic, social, and cultural equality.

The attention was directed toward the downtrodden in Puri. He is using the word Dalit [lower caste group] instead of using [M.K.] Gandhi's term Harijan. This is a part of his efforts to gain support of scheduled castes just like he did by honoring Dr. Admbedakar.

V.P. Singh announced that 30 percent of the Rajya Sabha seats should be reserved for women. His demonstration of this love for women's rights is to win the support of this large group that played a decisive role in Rajiv Gandhi's landslide victory in 1984. Women who were most upset with V.P. Singh for his decision to implement the Mandal report and the bloodshed that followed it.

V.P. Singh's five proposals caused excitement in the conference and shocked the prominent party leaders. V.P. Singh used these proposals to make his new and increasing support base stronger. These proposals electrified the conference atmosphere and the thousands of party workers were elated and approved the proposal in this mood.

V.P. Singh proposed that 60 percent of the party positions be reserved for minorities such as Muslims, Harijans, and scheduled tribes. He wants three of the four main positions in Janata Dal—president, general secretary, legislative leader, and president of legislative board—to be filled by members of socially and economically deprived sects. The principle of one-person-one-position will be strictly adhered to. Persons with income above a certain limit will not be allowed to hold positions in the party and the government. People who hold any party office will not be allowed to take any government office for 2 year after resigning from these offices.

One short-term objective for this proposals is to rise above the squabble over the positions within the party. The Janata Dal has been involved in this bickering over positions for the last several months. V.P. Singh favors Sharad Yadav becoming the general secretary. This choice has been challenged by many party leaders including Ajit Singh, Arun Nehru, Inder Kumar Gujral, Biju Patnayak. They support George Fernandez for this position.

Sharad Yadav will definitely get this position and Ajit Singh definitely will not get the presidency of legislative board for which he is contending if these proposals are approved. Ajit Singh does not belong to a backward class and he is neither a Muslim nor a Harijan. The ax will also fall on either the legislative leader Madhu Dandavate or President S.R. Bommai.

V.P. Singh is trying to put the party on a chosen path. He reasons that if the backward classes, Muslims, Harijans, and scheduled tribes are the social base of the party, then they should also hold major leadership positions in the party. The former prime minister tried to tell the people in Puri that he had moved from the center to the left. The Congress-I Party used to be in that position.

Some groups are greatly attracted to V.P. Singh. Even his opponents admit that the backward classes and the Muslims in Uttar Pradesh consider him their messiah and he is also acquiring the Harijan vote bank that was traditionally controlled by the Congress-I. However, he still has to present himself at the national level so that the middle class and the intellectual groups accept him.

* Congress-I Said Losing Popularity in South

91AS0654A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 18 Feb 91 p 6

[Article by Sadanand Gorabole: "Congress-I's Stand in the South is Being Uprooted"]

[Text] The Congress-I was badly beaten in the recently held district council elections in Kerala. The Congress-I now knows that its popularity in south India has eclipsed and it would never want to have midterm elections in such a situation. It knows well that it cannot win majority at the Center unless it wins in south India. Therefore, Congress-I will continue to endorse Chandra Shekhar government and delay midterm elections.

The Kerala defeat has broken the Congress-I belief that it has a strong hold on south India. The fact that the Congress-I has submitted to Jayalalitha's All-India Anna-Dravida Munnetra Kazagham [AIDMK] in Tamil Nadu also proves this point. In an effort to win Tamil Nadu seats in the legislative elections, the Congress-I has taken the defensive attitude and has left 168 out of 234 seats for the AIDMK and will run for only 66 seats. This clearly indicates that the Congress Party's confidence in south India is shaken and it is on the defensive there.

The reigning left-wing coalition won big in Kerala's district council elections while the Congress-I faced a crushing defeat. The left-wing coalition carried 12 out of the 14 district councils and won 238 out of the total 474 seats. The Congress-I had to be satisfied with only one district council. The Congress-I won in the Malapuram district, however, the credit for this victory goes to the Muslim League which bagged 12 seats.

The Congress-I has been greatly hurt by this defeat as it was very successful in the last Lok Sabha elections in Kerala. The people in Kerala have rejected the Congress-I within a year and a half. The Congress leaders are trying to blame this crushing defeat on the Gulf War. They are telling the people that thousands of families were worried about the war and did not participate in the elections. The second excuse is that the left-wing had used many illegal strategies during the elections. However, if the Congress-I sits quietly after these excuses, it would be suicidal for it in south India.

These elections also pointed out another serious danger to the Congress-I to which its leaders must attend to. In Kerala, when there were no Muslim candidates in a constituency, the Muslim voters voted for the left-wing candidates. The Congress-I will not be able to win the midterm elections if this tendency of Muslim voters is spread all over the country.

Mr. K.M. Mani, leaders of the Kerala Congress Party also took revenge against the Congress-I in these elections. Mr. Mani was angry at the Congress-I for not getting a central Cabinet position. Chandra Shekhar wanted to include Mr. Mani in his Cabinet, but the Congress-I had strongly opposed it and Chandra Shekhar had to drop the idea. K.M. Mani was looking for the right opportunity since then and found it during the district council elections in Kerala.

The major reason for the Congress-I defeat were the Mandal Commission (the reservation issue) and its ambiguous stand on the Ram Jan ambhumi issue. The way the chief ministers in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh were removed also helped increase unrest in south India. The internal strife within the party and disagreement among the groups in the coalition also contributed to the defeat. The Congress-I has awakened now after being defeated because of these mistakes and has started to come closer to the left-wing parties. Some Congress-I leaders have started warming up to some left-wing leaders in this context and have started some formal talks with them. They are trying to get support from the left-wing leaders for making Rajiv Gandhi the prime minister and Devilal, the deputy prime minister, has recently expressed this desire to the chief minister of West Bengal. Harikishan Singh Surjit, leader of the Communist Party of India (M), has said that the Congress-I leaders want to cooperate with the left-wing leaders but are avoiding open talks. He added that he could clearly say that there would be no cooperation with the Congress-I.

While the Congress-I is struggling to regain its lost prestige in south India, the Hinduism slogan of the BJP was also a failure in Kerala. The BJP had its candidates running for 447 seats in the district council elections and managed to win only two seats. Thus, the BJP claim that it has gained popularity in Kerala appears to be an idle boast. The BJP president, Lalkarishan Advani, had toured Kerala soon after the "chariot ride." Even this effort did not impress the people of Kerala. Keralites, known as the most politically aware voters, proved that elections cannot be won on the basis of Hindu slogans alone. Statements issued by some of the top leaders in the Jaipur convention hinted toward this fact. Mr. Advani issued a revised statement on the "chariot ride" and said that the BJP had nothing to do with this ride.

* Opposition to Gandhi as Premier Examined

91AS0720A Varnasi AAJ in Hindi 6 Mar 91 p 6

[Article by Vijay Narayan: "Why Rajiv Cannot Sit in the Prime Minister's Chair?"]

[Text] Two facts have come out of the activities in the nation's capital during the last 15-20 days. First, the Congress-I had installed Chandra Shekhar as the prime minister as a part of a plan. Second, Rajiv Gandhi had not given any assurance to the president that he would support the Chandra Shekhar government for one year or for any specific period.

One part of the conspiracy was to install Chandra Shekhar as the prime minister just like they always did when a non-Congress government or non-congress governor was removed. The Congress-I was having Chandra Shekhar government do the work which would be cumbersome for it. Perhaps, the problem of Boforus is still haunting it. This issue would have been cleared if the Supreme Court had not rejected the Delhi High Court decision.

The activities of this past fortnight indicate that the next phase of the plan is being implemented. The plan had almost succeeded. The proposal was to establish a national government under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi. Devilal, from Chandra Shekhar's camp, welcomed this idea and had started talks with Jayoti Basu, chief minister of West Bengal, in order to implement the plan. Before this, Harkishan Singh Surjit, member of the CPM politburo, had visited Calcutta to discuss this issue with Jayoti Basu. However, both communist parties have not given approval to this plan. Both communist parties were told that they were to remain neutral if Rajiv Gandhi were to become prime minister. However, they failed to get this assurance. When Rajiv Gandhi went to Moscow to discuss the Gulf War with the Soviet leaders, it was expected he was to ask Mr. Gorbachev to put pressure on the communist parties.

When they did not get a clear assurance from the communist parties, they tried to infiltrate the Janata Dal (S). Deputy Prime Minister Devilal was already involved in this effort. The Congress-I coalition had the support of 211 Lok Sabha members. About 20 to 25 Janata Dal (S) Lok Sabha members supported this plan. Mulayam Singh, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, was also contacted about it. However, he neither supported nor opposed this plan. Some people were busy breaking up the Janata Dal legislators. According to the Congress-I arithmetic, eight to ten legislators were expected to defect, however, only three legislators did actually defect. These three people were the same who have been making news for some time. This number could never reach 250 in any case. Rajiv Gandhi would definitely become prime minister if support of 260 members were available. Perhaps, Rajiv Gandhi had hinted about this plan to the president when he met him.

This situation of indecision continued until the day before the Lok Sabha budget session. The Congress-I has not given up this plan even now and the Chandra Shekhar government was not allowed to present the whole budget. Only a portion of budget was discussed and it was decided to submit four months' financial statement. The situation would be examined again after the budget session is over by 15 or 20 March. The Congress-I can have the Chandra Shekhar government do some more work during the next month. Last week, Chandra Shekhar had clearly indicated that the Lalu Prasad Yadav government in Bihar would exist only for a few more days. Rajiv Gandhi also had blamed the Bihar government for failing to establish law and order during his recent trip to Bihar. It is possible that the Central government will take action against the Bihar government.

The Congress-I camp people, who had been talking about Rajiv Gandhi becoming prime minister even before the mid-term elections, are saying that there are many benefits of running for the Lok Sabha elections under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi. It is also being said that voting for the opposition is useless if Rajiv will become the prime minister even if the opposition wins the elections. They have another rationale: The Congress-I and the AIDMK are forming a coalition for the April Tamil Nadu legislative assembly elections. This coalition will get some psychological boost if Rajiv Gandhi becomes the prime minister.

Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar knew of the Congress-I plan as did all the opposition leaders. Chandra Shekhar was helpless even after knowing this all. Lalkarishan Advani, the BJP leader, was also worried by this situation and he may also have told the president that it would be better to hold mid-term elections than having Rajiv Gandhi take the oath of prime ministership. The BJP is worried because it was blamed for the fall of Janata Dal government and now it would be blamed for Rajiv Gandhi's return without any elections.

* Commentary Views Election Themes

91AS0729A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 19 Mar 91 p 6

[Article by Jawaharlal Kaul: "The Question of Awakening, Soothing, or Saving"]

[Text] It is easy to say that the Lok Sabha be broken and new elections be held, however, it is not easy how to tell the voters and get their approval. The parties and the leaders who did not want new elections must have been aware of this difficulty. Chandra Shekhar's party did not want elections at all because Chandra Shekhar despite his interpersonal skills and pure Indian style did not stay long enough in power to have achieved anything. Then there was the stigma of selfishness that he carried because he had left his party for the position and had joined a party against which he has been working for many years. We have to admit that his image had improved during the last 4 months at least among the middle class. It would have been very possible that in a year or two the people would have forgotten how he had achieved power. When he saw that all this was not possible, he had to wear the robe of a martyr. Thus, he recommended dissolving the Lok Sabha and holding new elections.

Rajiv Gandhi was not in favor of holding elections. He had helped install the Chandra Shekhar government when the V.P. Singh government fell last year to avoid elections. According to his plans, the elections were to be held in November. He was trying to coerce Chandra Shekhar to remove more of his enemies. He went too far in his efforts and slipped. Rajiv should have backed off as the time demanded, however, his whole plan had fallen through so suddenly that he was taken aback. He tried sycophantically to get the elections postponed, but had no success. Finally, he had to act brave and declare that he had wanted new elections for the Lok Sabha from day one.

The BJP and Janata Dal leaders have been acting like lions since last November and demanding elections repeatedly. They were challenging each other to get into the arena. However, deep down they also wanted the elections to be postponed for a while. Now that the elections are right around the corner, all the parties are wondering what would they tell the people. There is plenty of ammunition as well as slogans with each party, however, elections are like a drummers' competition in which it is hard to predict whose voice will be heard distinctly.

The Janata Dal will use the same slogan as V.P. Singh has been using for the last few months—we want social justice. However, this just means that they want to implement the Mandal Commission recommendations. According to the arithmetic of votes, it means that they want to return to power using the equation of the backward castes, Harijans, and the Muslims. The BJP strategy was evident by Advani's chariot ride. The BJP has also made a huge portion of voters its base by promising to build Rama's temple.

The influence of the Mandal Commission was at its peak last year. Since then, several aspects of its recommendations have come to light. In the original report it had recommended reserving 27 percent of the positions for backward classes. It was obvious that non-backward classes would have opposed this proposal. Harijans, aborigines, and the Muslims were not part of this debate. The first two groups already had reserved quotas and they did not have to do anything with the Mandal Commission. The Muslims are not covered in Mandal Commission's recommendations. However, a new political equation was formed later and efforts were made to overhaul the whole communal system by including the Muslims with the Harijans and backward classes. Opposed to it, the BJP continued to expand its area of influence under the Rama's temple slogan. The idea was to build a temple at the site of Rama's birth place in Ayodhya. However, this changed into the campaign to define the Indian nationality or present the former ideal aggressively. This did not only question secularism, but also Nehru's philosophy.

These two issues are not as intense as they were last year. No one really knows how much these two issues have helped the two parties to increase the sphere of their influence. All we can do is make some estimates. Had there been elections last November, then the voters would have expressed their reactions clearly. In this situation, the BJP and the Janata Dal would have fought elections with each other in most of the country while other parties would have just stood aside. Now there is the fear that the people might have begun to think about other issues since these two issues have lost momentum. The voters perhaps will not use these two issues as the basis for electing their representatives. It is imperative for the Janata Dal and the BJP to refresh the memory of these issues. They should explain their social, cultural, and political ideologies to the people all over again. In other words, the basic strategy for the Janata Dal and the BJP should be to make the voters aware of their philosophies. These both parties should keep the voters awake!

What should Congress, the nation's largest party, do in this ideological warfare? It is not ready to talk about the Mandal Commission recommendations openly because its voter base will not like it. This is also difficult because V.P. Singh has not limited the issue to keeping 27 percent quota for the backward classes. The Congress had the same problem regarding the Rama temple. The Congress Party keeps saying that Rama's temple should be built in Ayodhya, but it also says that it should not be built at the site of Babri mosque. The Congress was subjected to the wrath of the minorities when it gave permission to lay the foundation stone before the last elections. The wrath of the majority will be turned toward it if it changes this decision now. The Congress is equally ambiguous about Mandal Commission's recommendations and Rama's temple. The Congress, therefore, would wish that the voters forget both these issues. The basis of Congress politics for many years has been to make sure that original and ideological questions are not transformed. It tried to keep them vague so that the voters have the misconception that the party would have a policy in the future. All would have some hope for themselves. One benefit of this approach is that the direction can be changed according to the wind. Some time it was tilting toward Indian culture and other times toward minorities. One miraculous thing about the Congress' form of secularism is that it can be moved in any direction! However, this "tent policy" of the Congress Party will not succeed if the voters really get carried away with an ideological issue. Therefore, it is more important for the Congress Party than ever before to make sure that the people remain sleeping.

This does not mean that the Congress Party lacks a slogan. The slogan of a permanent government is very old and tested slogan. The Congress Party had won back power from other governments using this very slogan. This very slogan was effectively used during the Janata Dal government. The Congress will use the slogan of a stable government in its election campaign again. The Congress Party is fortunate that the non-Congress parties give it the opportunities to use this slogan successfully. Rajiv Gandhi can have his way. If this formula can be successful twice then why should not it work the fourth [sic] time? However, there are some serious problems this time. In the past, whenever opposition governments were formed in states or at the Center, they had used anti-Congress themes as their slogans. In other words, the Congress Party has been given a chance and now other parties should have the opportunity. This very slogan was used by the National Front. The situation has changed after this government fell apart. V.P. Singh and BJP have raised the issue of overhauling the social structure in India. Since both of them are opposed to each other, the possibility of their union under a non-Congress umbrella to fight elections or form a government is remote. It seems that the Congress Party will not have the opportunity to create an atmosphere for a Congress-against-non-Congress type of rivalry this time. Additionally, the slogan for a stable government is not attractive now because the incidents that took place during Congress' stable rule have shaken up the whole nation.

The Communists also have an ideological side. Unfortunately, the Communists have lost their revolutionary front and are forced to enter the election arena behind the Janata Dal. V.P. Singh's quota idea can be more successful than the Communist ideology now. This does not agree with the Marxist philosophy. The Marxists are in a difficult position since they are forced to cross the river of elections with the help of the people they called "landlords" only a few years ago. The Communist parties are talking about strengthening their hold in Hindi-speaking areas and it is possible that they may win some seats there by forming coalitions. However, their whole efforts will be focused on saving their two forts—Kerala and West Bengal. Losing them and having some success in other areas would be fatal for them. Therefore, the main goal of the Communist parties' strategy would be to protect their present sphere of influence. The same is true for regional parties. A party like the DMK must protect its popular support while the Telgu Desam and Assam Gana Parishad will worry about remaining alive. As for Chandra Shekhar's socialist Janata Dal, it has to first take stock of the situation. It has no coalition, just a few leaders. However, this is not a major problem. The same is true of the Janata Dal. It is a party of leaders. However, it has an issue which Chandra Shekhar still lacks. Therefore, it would benefit if it makes some gains in a three-way contest. The Janata Dal (S) does not have the question about forming a government. All it has to worry is getting into the election competition.

Iran

Reportage on Visit by FRG Foreign Minister Genscher

Airport Arrival

LD0605191491 Tehran IRNA in English 1755 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 6, IRNA—The German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher arrived here this evening and was greeted at the airport by his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Genscher, here on a three-day official visit at the invitation of Velayati, told reporters at the airport that his government was interested in pursuing further development of "good relations" with Iran.

Referring to the "very successful" recent visit of Velayati to Germany, he said: "My visit here is the next step in further development of our relations."

Genscher who was speaking through an interpreter, also underlined Iran's "important role" in the creation of "a peace order" for the region.

"We highly appreciate the very responsible role that Iran has played during the important month at the end of 1990 and beginning of 1991," he said, adding that "we will have to speak together about the fate of the Iraqi refugees."

He added that Germany had placed particular emphasis on its relief aid to the Iraqi refugees in Iran which he said hosts the greatest number of the refugees. Iran is host to over 1.1 million Iraqi refugees.

"I do believe that the good cooperation between us in assisting the refugees is one expression of our good relations," he said.

During his stay here, Genscher will hold talks with Velayati, President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and a number of other ministers. He is also expected to visit Iraqi refugees camps in border areas.

Genscher is the second West European foreign minister to visit Tehran in a week. Earlier this week, the French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas paid a three-day official visit to Tehran.

Regional Security Discussed

LD0705105591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati discussed bilateral relations, regional developments, and common views of Iran and Germany on world developments during their talks on 7 May.

According to a Central News Unit report, during the first round of talks between the two countries' foreign ministers, Mr. Genscher, while expressing the desire to be informed of our country's views on the current developments and future panorama of the Persian Gulf, stressed the importance of the Islamic Republic of Iran's role in connection with maintaining the region's security. Genscher said: Any plan for the security of the Persian Gulf region should be the outcome of the will of the region's countries.

Mr. Genscher expressed doubt on allocation of any role for Iraq in the security plan of the Persian Gulf region as long as Saddam Husayn remains at the head of that country's government. He also reiterated the need for annihilation of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and added: The Iraqi regime should not be given the chance to rearm. Mr. Genscher also asked for safeguarding Iraq's territorial integrity.

On the basis of the same report, Mr. Velayati, referring to the closeness of the German Government's stances to Iran's principled views toward the future of the Persian Gulf, positively evaluated the recent developments toward cooperation of the regional countries for restoring peace, security, and stability in the region. While reiterating the need for maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity, he said: Establishment of democracy in Iraq would solve that country's problem. It is therefore necessary for the Iraqi people themselves to determine their fate.

Mr. Velayati criticized the decision to permit the Iraqi Army helicopters to fly and crush the people, and termed it as a big blunder which led to subsequent tragedies. While expressing opposition to the presence and monopolized influence of any foreign force in the Persian Gulf region, he stressed the importance of giving the prime role to the region's countries for maintaining regional security. Referring to the great need of the Iraqi refugees, he reminded the German foreign minister of the need to increase international aid.

Genscher Describes Meetings

LD0705112191 Berlin ADN in German 1024 GMT 7 May 91

[Excerpt] Tehran (ADN)—Germany and Iran are determined to extend their relations both in the political and in the economic fields, Federal Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said in Tehran today after his talks with leading politicians of the country. He estimated that generally Iran is very interested in opening up to the Western world. The recent contacts between the foreign ministers of France and Iran have shown this too.

Genscher conveyed to 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani an invitiation from Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl to visit Germany. The Iranian head of state invited the chancellor to Iran. As early as this June, the economics ministers of the two countries will meet in Bonn in the framework of the joint economic commission.

In his talks with Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, as well as with Economics and Finance Minister Mohsen Nurbakhsh, the German efforts and commitment to helping the Iraqi refugees was acknowledged, Genscher told the press. There was agreement that an Iraqi state under Saddam Husayn's leadership is still a threat. The regime in Baghdad is still a danger to the region and to its own country's population. A democratization of Iraq would be an important contribution to peace and stability in the Near and Middle East, Genscher stressed. There was also agreement that a relaxation of sanctions imposed against Iraq would, at the moment, be the wrong signal.

The Federal foreign minister said he explained to his Iranian interlocuters the German position, according to which initiatives for a peace order on the Gulf must come from the region itself. Germany would then support these proposals. [passage omitted]

Visit Termed 'Significant Event'

LD0705074191 Tehran IRNA in English 0629 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 7, IRNA—The editorial in the English daily TEHRAN TIMES Tuesday said that the visit to Tehran by German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher who arrived here Monday night is an opportunity for broadening common perspectives.

The visit should be considered a significant event as it will offer opportunities for exchange of views both on the recent developments in the region, and on the expansion of bilateral ties, the English daily said.

It added that the two countries share common views in many political aspects including the question of the security scheme for the Persian Gulf region, Germany's acceptance of the need for participation of Iran in any regional security arrangement and the fate of the Iraqi refugees.

As for bilateral relations, the paper added, the visit must be evaluated as very significant "in broadening the basis of the close ties presently existing between Iran and Germany, and in diversifying the relations in economic, political and cultural areas."

Genscher's visit "will prove a turning point in the commencement of activities by the joint economic commission" which "could be more active in promoting bilateral relations in commerce, transfer of technology and joint investments."

In the cultural area, it added, "there is ground to hope for greater activities by Goethe Institute in Tehran and Hafiz Institute in Germany."

"During the post-revolution era Germany has founded its relations with Iran mainly on mutual interests without allowing that relation to be influenced by Iran's relations with other countries, especially the United States," the editorial concluded.

Commentary Discusses Cheney's Gulf Tour

NC0605182291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1630 GMT 6 May 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] The U.S. defense secretary arrived in Saudi Arabia today, beginning his tour of the Persian Gulf which will include the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC]. The U.S. official's visit to this region is actually part of Washington's attempts to impose its recently proposed regional security plan. It is clear that the Americans are trying to exploit their military weight and their success in the oil war to create favorable conditions for establishing military bases in the region. Reports today speak of the possibility that the United States might establish a major command and military operations center in Bahrain to be used for special operations when the need arises.

Long-term strategic plans attach a very special importance to the Middle East and to the core of this region, the Persian Gulf. On this basis, and taking into account the United States' history of colonialism in this part of the world, the region's countries must be alert to such schemes and proposals.

Doubtless, the sons of the Islamic peoples in the region will not remain inactive vis-a-vis the possible U.S. overt and covert intervention in the regional affairs. At any rate, Dick Cheney's mission will focus on trying to persuade the governments of the GCC countries to offer greater facilities to the United States so that it can increase its military presence in the region.

Nevertheless, the Pentagon knows quite well that the time when U.S. policies were implemented with utter ease is now gone in light of the growth of the Islamic movements in the region. The experiences of the region's countries during the past 10 years embody the nature and depth of the changes and developments which this region has witnessed. There is a favorable climate today for further mutual understanding among the region's countries in order to achieve their collective objectives in an atmosphere of security and stability. Such a climate is capable of being a favorable beginning to terminate all forms of foreign intervention in the region's affairs.

The forces of global arrogance, chiefly the United States, are seeking to undermine this climate in order to further their colonial aims. The region's circumstances are markedly different from what they were prior to the oil war. During his Gulf tour, Dick Cheney, who is visiting the region today, will raise the issue of the latest developments in Iraq, the future of the U.S. military presence in the region, and the status of the 190,000 U.S. troops stationed here.

It behooves the region's countries, particularly the GCC countries, to use this opportunity—Dick Cheney's visit—to make the Americans understand that the region's countries believe that their national security cannot be guaranteed outside the framework of collective cooperation among all the region's countries and without any form of foreign hegemony and intervention.

The future will show how much the GCC countries appreciate this historic responsibility. This will become apparent during the talks Dick Cheney will hold in these countries.

Khomeyni Criticizes U.S. Action in Gulf

LD0505153391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] We will never tolerate changes in the political geography of the region and we will put to work all our resources to defend the Muslims of the region.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni said this at a meeting this morning with model workers from all over the country and various strata of the people. The meeting was held beside the immaculate shrine of his holiness the Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be admitted to paradise. While making this remark, he also referred to the aid given to Iraqi refugees, stating that Western aid for the Iraqi refugees is quite insignificant. While over 1 million Iraqis are in Iran, the assistance received only suffices for 10,000.

He added: America is terrified of the anti-U.S. spirit of the Shiites of southern Iraq, and for this reason it has given a free hand to the Ba'thist regime to kill the people of southern Iraq. America realizes too well that the foundations of the Islamic movement of the Shiites are becoming stronger and that the Shiite movement will most likely be the fundamental nucleus of the Islamic government in Iraq. This will be far more dangerous for the Western world than the continuation of Ba'thist rule.

In another part of his speech, Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni considered that teachers are among the most deprived strata in society. He emphasized that teachers play the biggest role in our society in defending and ensuring the continuity of the system and the revolution. The officials of the system should find ways of helping to improve the welfare of this noble and hard-working stratum.

More on Criticism

LD0505175191 Tehran IRNA in English 1653 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 5, IRNA—Hojjat ol-Eslam Ahmad Khomeyni today attacked the American leaders whose hands he said were stained with the blood of world Muslims and for "inciting Saddam to massacre the Iraqi people."

"The U.S. lifted all obstacles in the way of Saddam and instructed him to slaughter the people in the worst possible manner as soon as it felt Iraqi Muslims were about to seize power," he told a group of visiting teachers and educationalists. "The U.S. feared that the Shiites in southern Iraq might get strength and form an Islamic system of government like the Islamic Republic of Iran, something which would be more dangerous to the West than the Saddam regime," he said.

"The fear of the arrogance and Washington of Islam, [as received] particularly the brand of Islam institutionalized in Iran by the late imam, accounted for countless crimes commited by the Ba'thists in Iraq," Hoj. Khomeyni pointed out. The goal of the U.S. in setting up a 50,000-man refugee camp in northern Iraq is to partition Iraq while there are still two million other refugees living away from their homes, he said.

Terming the amount of relief aid donated by the Westerners to Iraqi refugees as "very little", Khomeyni said "despite the hullabaloo set up by arrogance over such a trivial assistance, their help fell far short of feeding even the people of two small villages."

The late imam's son also described the West's donation of animal food for refugees as "worst insults against Muslims," and expressed doubt the spoiled foodstuff, contaminated and second hand clothing donated by certain Western countries might date back to the Vietnam war. "We declare that we will never make a compromise with the U.S. but will fight to the last drop of our blood to defend Muslims and the causes of the revolution," he concluded.

Motives of U.S. Presence in Iraq Viewed

NC0505175991 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 5 May 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] The plan to establish a security zone for Iraqi refugees, which was proposed and is being implemented by the Allied forces, has given rise to concern in political circles in the Middle East.

Despite statements by U.S. officials to the effect that the security zone in northern Iraq is intended only to protect Iraqi Kurdish refugees, there are signs that the Americans, with the help of their Western allies, want to pave the way for the implementation of their future policies in the region.

The Americans have expanded the area of their deployment in northern Iraq to 50 km in width and 100 km in length. The Americans, it seems, want to establish a permanent area of self-rule for the Kurds along the Turkish borders. Western media has cited classified material pointing to this design.

The U.S. move comes at a time when U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney says that a large section of U.S. troops and equipment will remain in the region.

Meanwhile, the decision by the U.S. Administration to establish six military bases in the Persian Gulf region leaves no room for doubt that Washington intends, through the establishment of a military base in northern Iraq, to use that base, which will have a certain strategic value, to exercise pressure and promote its political goals.

In order to implement this scheme, the Americans did not forget to coordinate with the Zionist entity. While the Israelis are busy building Jewish settlements in the occupied Palestinian areas, America seeks to station its forces in northern Iraq, and thus gain a foothold in the region. There is no doubt that the continuation of this U.S. policy threatens Iraq's territorial integrity as well as peace and security in the region.

Despite Washington's promise not to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs, the U.S. authorites seek to exploit the political situation in that country and to promote its own goals by maintaining a military presence in Iraq. The installation in power of Iraqi officials who follow U.S. policies and enjoy relative legitimacy is among Washington's objectives.

The popular wrath against Saddam, which has mounted because of his numerous violations of human rights over the past few months, seems to prevent Washington from resuming its ties with Baghdad.

Recently, U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle said that the U.S. Administration does not favor Saddam's staying in power. This statement suggests that America will not spare any effort to bring about a pro-U.S. Government in Baghdad. To achieve this objective would flagrantly violates the UN Charter. Therefore, international organizations should take effective action to safeguard the Iraqi people's right to self-determination.

Daily Holds U.S. Responsible for 'Destruction'

LD0605103791 Tehran IRNA in English 0858 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 6, IRNA—An Iranian daily Monday said Saddam Husayn of Iraq and the U.S. Administration must pay the price of destruction of the wealth of the Iraqi and Kuwaiti nations.

"The Persian Gulf crisis and its repercussions and outcome all relate to Saddam Husayn's regime and the U.S.," wrote KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in its editorial adding "The Islamic Republic has done all within its power to help the refugees but it does not mean that we should shoulder the burden of those countries which have played a direct role in creating the present situation."

Turning to the reluctance of the U.S. to help the refugees and Saddam Husayn's sneering at the refugee plight, the daily said that the Iraqi nation should know their enemies and friends.

"Those countries sending spoiled foodstuff and unusable clothing to the refugees have betrayed their nature to the Iraqi people and certainly in future, the oppressed nations will not forget this support for human rights," it said.

UK's Criticism of UN Over Refugees Viewed

LD0605161591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0959 GMT 6 May 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Following Britain's criticism of the UN's conduct regarding the Iraqi refugees, the UN secretary general's spokesman rebuffed the criticism and, for his part, questioned the performance of Western countries in this affair.

As an international organization, the United Nations naturally coordinates world cooperation and action. In other words, it is an executive system with the member states as its operators. The executive role of the United Nations is to guarantee world peace and stability, which was the fundamental aim and objective in forming the organization. This responsibility was allocated to the UN Security Council [UNSC], in reality to the five permanent members of that Council. In practice, we have witnessed, and continue to witness, the votes, views and strength of those members with the right of veto which has had, and continues to have, a decisive role. The funds for that organization are provided by its members. As we have seen, some members have refused to pay their dues to the United Nations as a demonstration of their opposition to certain UN actions.

Naturally, Britain's criticism over the UN's handling of the Iraqi refugee issue has specific reasons. It is clear that the Persian Gulf war was, for all practical purposes, a war fought by America and Western countries; since there were no UN forces participating in the war and the war was not led by the United Nations. While the military action was in progress, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar said that he was briefed by the Allied forces on the progress of the war and that the war was not a UN-sponsored war.

Meanwhile, the number of Iraqis seeking refuge has increased over the past few days. The Islamic Republic of Iran has given shelter to over 1 million of the refugees. Considering the extent of the crisis, the construction of refugee camps inside Iraq by France, Britain, and the United States will in no way solve the problems and difficulties of the Iraqi refugees, especially since the capacity of the camps set up in iraq is limited to 50,000.

Most probably, Britain's objectives behind its criticism are political and for propaganda purposes. In reality, it is a cover for the actions of America, Britain, and the rest of the West with regard to the current Iraqi refugee crisis.

The Persian Gulf war was fought along the lines of the positions of the United States and Western countries in the Persian Gulf in order to achieve objectives that were not included in the UNSC resolutions. It is natural that those very same countries are mainly responsible for the current tragedies in Iraq and Kuwait, both of which are direct consequences of the Persian Gulf war. The very same countries armed Iraq with the most up-to-date military equipment during Iraq's war against Iran, thus paving the way for the expansionist ambitions of that regime.

World public opinion continues to disapprove of the handling of Iraq's internal crisis by those countries. Meanwhile the distressing plight of the Iraqi refugees continues, with their situation deteriorating every day. It is therefore obvious that Britain's criticism of the United Nations is nothing but open demagogy designed to cover-up the misconduct of Western countries during the current crisis involving the oppresed Iraqi refugees.

ROK Official Arrives To Promote Ties

LD0505105491 Tehran IRNA in English 0846 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 5, IRNA—Special envoy of the South Korean Government and former Foreign Minister Kwang Su-choi arrived here Saturday night carrying a written message from Korean President No Tae-u for President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He was greeted at the airport by First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati.

Speaking briefly upon arrival, the South Korean official referred to Iran's important role in the region and voiced his country's willingness to promote ties with Iran in various fields.

During his four-day visit, Kwang Su-choi is to discuss issues of mutual interest and regional developments with the Iranian officials.

Meets With President

LD0605121891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Mr. Kwang Su-choi, special envoy of the South Korean president this morning. Mr. Kwang Su-choi submitted the written message of the South Korean president and said he was delighted by his trip to the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said: South Korea has a special respect for the great people of Iran and for the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He also gave a report on the Korean peninsula region and his country's policies in establishing relations and understandings with the countries of the world. He said: The security of the Persian Gulf region is particularly important to South Korea because our security and that of the world is tied to security in this region.

He also declared that his country was prepared to further politico-economic cooperation and participate in the reconstruction program of our country.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani then thanked Mr. No Tae-U for his kind message and welcomed the unity of the two Koreas saying: We thought from the start that the two countries should move toward unity so that the people of the two Koreas may be able to cooperate and have closer relations with each other. In this regard, we shall support any moves that will result in this unity.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also referred to the critical situation of the Persian Gulf region and said: Unfortunately, the factors creating tenion in the region are serious—especially the situation in Iraq and its internal insecurities which affect the region as a whole. We believe that through international cooperation, the people of Iraq may be able to live in peace and tranquility. The Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to cooperate in every respect to bring about stability in the region.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani concluded by expressing satisfaction with Iran and South Korea's cooperation. He said: We are keen to expand relations and interested in the participation of your country in the extensive reconstruction projects which we have planned.

The official invitation extended by the South Korean president to Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani to visit that country, was presented at the meeting and our country's president accepted the invitation. He said hopes that this trip may materialize at an appropriate time.

Views Cooperation With Velayati

LD0505123491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 5 May 91

[Excerpt] The adviser and special envoy of the South Korean president who arrived in Tehran carrying a message from the president of his country to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, met Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati this morning. He stressed that his country is keen to promote and expand ties between the two countries. He pointed to the important role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the provision of security and the establishment of peace in the Middle East region, especially in the Persian Gulf. He announced: Security in the Middle East is essential for world security. He lauded the Islamic Republic of Iran's steps and efforts for the establishment of stability in the region and announced his country's support for those steps.

For his part, Mr. Velayati spoke of the existence of good grounds for cooperation in various fields between the two countries and said that there are no difficulties in the way of expanding relations between them. Referring to the Persian Gulf crisis, he described the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts to resolve that issue and stressed the need for the participation of all countries in assistance to improve the distressing state of the Iraqi refugees. [passage omitted]

Cabinet Meets, Discusses President's Visits

NC0605070291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] The Cabinet met yesterday afternoon to follow up on the decisions adopted on mutual issues between Tehran, Damascus, and Ankara in the wake of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to the two countries.

The president told the Cabinet that the basic issues discussed with Turkish and Syrian officials dealt with the Middle East, Palestine, and Iraq. He described the proximity of the views of the Syrian and Turkish presidents with the Islamic Republic's outlooks in view of the special role each of the countries play in the region as significant.

During this session, Minister of Economy and Finance Mr. Nurbakhsh, and Central Bank Governor 'Adeli, who had gone to Washington to participate in the joint IMF-World Bank session, briefed the Cabinet on this session and the decisions adopted there.

Iranian, Turkish Stand on Kurds Criticized

NC0605174691 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 4 May 91

[Unattributed commentary: "How Are Turkey and Iran Solving the Problem of the Iraqi Kurds"]

[Text] Reports about the peace talks between the leaders of Iraq's Kurdistan movement and the Iraqi regime officials sparked off a great commotion among the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Turkish Government, and Syria. Although these talks have not yet reached a definite conclusion and an agreement has not been signed between the leaders of the Kurdish movement and the Iraqi Government, the Governments of Iran, Syria, and Turkey—especially Iran—have [words indistinct] and have resorted to futile efforts to prevent an agreement between the Iraqi Kurds and the Iraqi Government.

We remember 1983, and some time after that, when peace talks were in progress between the Iraqi Government and some of the Iraqi Kurdistan organizations, and an outcome was imminent. The Turkish Government tried to upset the peace talks. Resorting to pressure and all other means, it finally prevented a peace agreement and an agreement on a solution to the Kurdish problem. Thus, the decades of suffering of the Iraqi Kurds continued and dozens of more heartbreaking and shocking tragedies were inflicted on this oppressed nation.

Now, after the death, destruction, and hardship suffered by the Iraqi Kurds in spring of this year, apparently a just and humanitarian solution to the Kurdish problem is on the agenda. It seems that this time the inhuman clerical regime has assumed the duty of plotting against and foiling the peace efforts for solving the Kurds' problem. It is because of this that we see how mullah Hashemi-Rafsanjani took a trip to Damascus and Ankara in order to collude with his Syrian and Turkish counterparts and to subvert and to obstruct a solution to the Kurdish problem in Iraq, thus preventing a solution to this humantarian problem.

The officials of Iran, Turkey, and Syria revealed in their official statements that the major objective behind Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visits to Damascus and Ankara was to discuss the regional situation, the Kurdish refugee problem, and Iraq's domestic situation. In other words, even though Iran, Syria, and Turkey state that they oppose intervention in Iraq's domestic affairs, they blatantly do not want to work for the benefit and interests of the Iraqi people and the Kurdish refugees. On the contrary, they want to work against a peaceful solution to the Kurdish problem in Iraq and to intervene in Iraq's domestic affairs.

During the joint talks between Turgut Ozal and mullah Hashemi-Rafsanjani, it was said that if the international community does not solve the problem of Kurds in Iraq, the Iranian and Turkish Governments will join hands and attempt to solve this problem. Truly, what is the meaning behind such remarks? Has either the Kurdish movement in Iraq or the Iraqi Government handed over its authority to the rulers in Ankara and Tehran to solve the Kurdish problem in Iraq on behalf of the Kurdish movement and the Iraqi Government?

Naturally, the Kurdish problem has been unresolved for a long time, both in Iraq and in other parts of Kurdistan, and it is actually the duty of the international community and progressive mankind to try to find a solution to this problem. The gist of the matter is that the Governments of Iran and Turkey are not in an impasse because the Kurdish problem remains unsolved and because they are concerned about the continuing hardship and tragedies the Kurds are facing. What frightens the chauvinist leaders of Iran and Turkey to death is any sign of the smallest effort in Iraq for a peaceful and reconciling solution to this problem.

Turkey and Iran are well aware—and international public opinion has revealed this—that these two governments are actually scared that the Iraqi Kurds will achieve their justice within the framework of Iraq's territorial integrity; then the Kurds in Iran and Turkey, who are much more numerous than the Kurds in Iraq, will use this as a precedence to force Iran to give in to the long-standing and humanitarian rights of the Kurds in both Kurdistans in Iran and Turkey. Everyone has the right to ask the Iranian and Turkish officials: If (?you truly) support a solution to the Kurdish problem in Iraq, why are you not seeing beyond your nose and refusing to confess that the Kurdish people and their humanitarian rights do exist in your two countries too? If you are truthful and intend to solve the Kurdish problem, why do you not start in your own country so that you will set an example for Iraq, and Iraq will have no alternative but to accept the desires of the Kurdish citizens in Iraqi Kurdistan?

What the rulers in Turkey and Iran possibly mean by a solution to the Kurdish problem in Iraq is the adoption of the same method that has been used for decades in Iran and Turkey and during the Ottoman Empire. In other words, they intend to [word indistinct] the 11 March 1970 declaration and Iraq's 1974 autonomy law, and to negate the existence of a Kurdish nation in Iraq, as in Iran and Turkey. They also intend—as the Kurds have been known as mountainous Turks for years and as Iranian [word indistinct] to consider the Kurds as part of the Arab race in Iraq and thus to rid themselves of this headache.

Whether these gentlemen like it or not, they are mistaken. Our era is the era of the liberation of oppressed people and the destruction of dictators and oppressors. It is not the era of secret collusions for devouring a nation and a people that has thousands of years of history and hundreds of years of liberation struggles. It is better for mullah Hashemi-Rafsanjani and the others in Syria and Turkey who think like he does to look at their own country instead of trying to distort and obstruct a solution to the Kurdish problem in Iraq. They must bear in mind the tens of millions of Kurds who are living under their domination and who are deprived of all political and humanitarian rights. This is what logic demands, and this is the way that leads to the solution of the Kurdish problem. This is the way in which peace and security can be served and friendship and fraternity be achieved among the regional peoples.

Agreement Reached With Saudi Arabia on Hajj

LD0505172591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 5 May 91

[Excerpts] The amount of currency given to pilgrims this year will be 850 Saudi rials, calculated at the market rate. [passage omitted]

On the minor pilgrimage performed throughout the year, the deputy for hajj and pilgrimage said that during talks with Saudi Arabian authorities an agreement was reached on the main issue of sending pilgrims every week. There is a difference of opinion on the number of pilgrims and it has been decided that 5,000 will be allowed to perform the minor pilgrimage every week. [passage omitted] He announced that the Saudis have agreed to the gathering of Muslims and the ceremony of the disavowal of the infidels. He expressed the hope that the gathering place of the Muslims will be a suitable one so that it can be reached easily.

*Economic Transactions With Italy Expanding

91AS0834G London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Apr 91 p 4

[Text] While the value of the imports of the Islamic Republic from Italy in 1988 and 1989 did not exceed $400 million and $500 million, respectively, these imports increased dramatically last year, their value reaching $1 billion. Parallel with the rapid increase in the value of the exports of Italy to Iran, Iran has also continuously added to the amount of its crude oil exports to Italy. Last year, with the export of significant amounts of crude oil, about $1.2 billion in foreign currency revenues were added to the treasury. Engineer Mahluji, the minister of mines and metals of the Islamic Republic and the Iranian president of the Joint Economic Commission of Iran and Italy, in a meeting with the minister of foreign affairs of Italy, announced some time ago that the efforts of the joint economic commission of Iran and Italy have resulted in the volume of trade between the two countries reaching $2.2 billion in 1990. He added: "If this trend continues, the level of relations between the two countries, in accordance with the projected amount in the agreement between the two countries, will reach the amount agreed upon last year between the minister of foreign trade of Italy and the minister of mines and metals of Iran." The economic officials of the two countries announced last year that in the course of the five-year developmental plan, the volume of trade between Rome and Tehran will reach $13 billion.

According to available reports from Tehran, the minister of mines and metals of the Islamic Republic upon the arrival of the Italian foreign minister to Tehran announced that within the framework of the bilateral economic, scientific, cultural, technical and political activities between the two countries, the building of the Mobarakeh steel complex is particularly important. It is hoped that the joint cooperation between the two countries in this connection will reach results in the second half of 1370 [21 March 1991-20 March 1992].

The minister of mines and metals of the Islamic regime of Tehran compared the existing problems in terms of the issuance of visas for Iranian technical experts and also the high price of Italian equipment by comparison to world prices as some of the important existing problems in expanding economic cooperation between the two countries and expressed hopes that these problems will be eliminated soon.

A report from Tehran indicates that during his brief visit to Tehran, the Italian foreign minister expressed a great deal of optimism about the activities of the joint commission on technical and economic cooperation between Iran and Italy and said that with the expansion of the economic relations between Tehran and Rome, it is hoped that this year Italy will buy more crude oil from the Islamic Republic, and, in addition, they will have active joint cooperation in the developmental projects of that country.

*Pre-Revolutionary Programs Reinstated

91AS0834C London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Apr 91 p 2

[Text] The reinstatement of prerevolutionary programs by the government of Hashemi-Rafsanjani continues. Following the reinstatement of the "Literacy Corps" program, it is now time to revitalize the "Health Corps" program. The Islamic government reinstated the "Literacy Corps" program under the heading of "Teacher Soldier" some time ago, and some of the high school graduates who are drafted into military service are sent to villages as "teacher soldiers" to teach in rural elementary schools.

The Health Corps program is now also supposed to be reinstated, under the heading of "messengers of health," so as not to humble the regime.

Dr. Malekzadeh, the minister of health, treatment and medical education, announced the news of the preparations for and studying of the plan for the Messengers of Health (Health Corps) during his visit to Arsanjan (Fars Province).

He said: **"The Ministry of Health is studying with the command headquarters of the armed forces a plan to implement the Messengers of Health program. Based on this plan, draftees with a high-school diploma, upon passing a course on primary diseases and treatment, will be sent to villages."**

The Literacy Corps members, the Health Corps members, and the Development Corps members were among the successful programs of the period before the revolution that transformed the villages in the country. With the coming to power of the Islamic government, all these programs were condemned because of the hostility towards the previous regime and whatever was related to it, such as the Literacy, health, and development Corps programs.

Now that the Islamic government has realized its mistake, however, it has reinstated the same programs under new names. Of course, it remains to be seen how close to the quality of the past programs will be the training which these recruits receive in their respective programs.

*Tehran Divided Into Seven Security Zones

91AS0834H London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Apr 91 p 4

[Text] It was announced in Tehran that Tehran has been divided into the following security zones: North, South, East, West, Shahr-e Rey, Shemiranat, and Central. Each zone will have security "fields," and every "security field" may have a guard station. The police stations and committees which have existed throughout Tehran are to be eliminated.

The commander of the security zone of the Tehran suburbs, which include Karaj, Savjeblagh, Shahriar, Varamin, Damavand, and Qom, will be Brigadier General Guard Commander 'Ali Yari (of the revolution committee).

Interestingly, the uniforms of the Law Enforcement Force will be dark green. h1

*All Birth Certificates To Be Changed

91AS0834D London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Apr 91 p 2

[Text] The central office of records of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced that by the end of 1372 [20 March 1994], all old birth certificates will be changed. This change will also include Iranians abroad. The director of the national records office said: So far, 40 million new birth certificates with the insignia of the Islamic Republic have been issued. The old birth certificates have the lion and sun insignia with a crown on the top.

The director of the office of records did not specify when Iranians living abroad will be able to go to the consulates of the Islamic Republic to change their birth certificates.

Pakistan

Bhutto: Nuclear Testing Would Isolate Country

BK0705004691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1729 GMT 6 May 91

[Text] Karachi, May 6 (AFP)—Pakistan's former prime minister Benazir Bhutto said here Monday that nuclear testing would isolate Pakistan and called for a regional approach to prevent nuclear proliferation in South Asia.

"Although Pakistan has the knowledge, it is not appropriate to undertake detonation because it would isolate us... and increase threats to our security," Ms. Bhutto told reporters at her seaside residence here.

"Before the pressure for detonation mounts, there must be a regional solution," she said, adding that "such a solution can not be achieved by singling out Pakistan for discriminatory treatment."

This was an appparent reference to a demand that Pakistan sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Islamabad has agreed to sign the treaty, but only if India follows suit.

The United States cut off about 600 million dollars in economic and military assistance in October on suspicions that Islamabad's nuclear programme was geared to military purposes.

Ms. Bhutto, who returned Monday from a three-week foreign tour, also called for "mutual arms reductions between Pakistan and India," adding, however, that this objective could not be achieved by expecting Pakistan to curtail its strength unilaterally.

Ms. Bhutto also expressed deep sorrow over the tragedy in Bangladesh where 126,000 people are feared to have died in last week's cyclone. She said the tragedy was a reminder of the need to channel resources away from military needs and into development.

Minister Nabi Leaves for UAE, Saudi Arabia

BK0505153691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] Federal Production Minister Islam Nabi left Karachi today for visits to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. In the UAE, he will meet the president of Crescent Petroleum and exchange views on the progress of the hydrocracker plant being set up in Karachi. The federal minister will later go to Jeddah where he will hold discussions with the Islamic Development Bank president on the possibilities of bank's participation in the proposed Pakistan-Iranian joint ventures under which an oil refinery at Port Qasim, Karachi, is also being considered. Before his departure, Islam Nabi said the Iranian deputy oil minister will visit Pakistan later this month for talks on the oil refinery project and sign a memorandum of understanding in this connection.

U.S. 'Double Standards' on Kashmir Assailed

BK0405140591 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 4 May 91 p 6

[Editorial: "Never Too late"]

[Text] Prime Minister [PM] Mian Nawaz Sharif Wednesday asked the United Nations to take serious notice of the tyrannical acts being committed by the Indian security forces in held Kashmir. Addressing the Punjab Muslim League convention in Lahore, he said the Indian armed forces were engaged in inflicting the worst type of brutalities on the Muslims in the occupied Valley. There was no parallel in human history for the atrocities being perpetrated by the Indians on the hapless Kashmiri Muslims, he added. The Prime Minister also appealed to the superpowers to intervene in Indian-held Kashmir and act as they had acted for the liberation of Kuwait and restoration of its suzerainty. He stressed that they should also ensure implementation of UN resolutions on Kashmir.

It is, indeed, most heartening to note that the keynote of Nawaz Sharif's address to the convention of his party was the Kashmir issue which has, of late, been brought out of limbo by the government. The PM also very appropriately asked the world body to do its bit and made no mention of any bilateral solution to the problem such as Foreign Secretaries'-level talks in either of the two countries. A number of such exercises have been carried out in the recent past but have always come up with much rhetoric and no results. No amount of chicanery by the Indians can obliterate the UN resolutions from the record of the world body and it is on the basis of these resolutions that the Kashmir issue has to be resolved.

As the Prime Minister pointed out in his speech, it is obvious the Indians are convinced they are playing on a weak wicket in held Kashmir, else why would they have decided on not holding elections there? It has rightly been stressed by Mian Nawaz Sharif that the Indians fear a crushing defeat for the government should the exercise of the ballot be permitted. They would, therefore, continue trying to suppress the freedom fighters by force and this, too, will be an exercise in futility. However, it is the time now for the UN and the superpowers to act immediately to stop the senseless massacre of the Muslims in held Kashmir and arrange for the holding of a free and fair plebiscite to determine the wishes of the Kashmiri Muslims. It would not be out of place to point out once again that if America can be so concerned about Saddam Husayn's barbaric treatment of the Kurds, why can it not move the United Nations to step in and stop the wanton killing, torture and rape being committed by the Indian occupation forces in held Kashmir? Are the Muslims there any lesser human beings than the Kurds and are the Indian security forces something very special that they should be allowed to get away with the worst type of crimes against humanity? These are questions which just do not have any answers even given the double standards which the United States has always been pleased to adopt.

U.S. Criticized for 'Dictating' to Third World

BK0405140191 Lahore THE NATION in English 4 May 91 p 6

[Editorial: "Dictating Terms a la Washington"]

[Text] How does a superpower arrogate itself the right to tell other nations as to what they should or should not do has been clearly brought home by Washington's decision to ban sale of component parts of a communications satellite to China. The Chinese, though out of favour with the Americans for not having gone far enough in liberalising their economy, were being considered again for renewal of most-favoured nation status for trading purposes. But, in the wake of the State Department's "concern" that China had provided a nuclear power reactor to Algeria and was planning to sell ballistic missiles and technology to Pakistan, President Bush has refused to approve an export licence for the sale of satellite parts to China. A White House spokesman commenting on the President's decision said that it "underscores the importance attached to non-proliferation." The Americans were said to be engaged in "intensive discussions" with China on "proliferation issues" which, given their track record, would mean that they have been trying to exert pressure to dictate terms on the nuclear issues. The Chinese are obviously no banana republic to succumb to the US browbeating, and have been, like any other self-respecting sovereign nation, following an independent policy. Nonetheless, it does not suit the overlords of the unipolar world to have countries in the new world order that are still prone to making their own decisions.

Following the "horrible example" that they have made of Saddam Husayn, the Americans, flying too high and too fast, are arrogant with power and flexing their muscles to teach lessons. Perhaps it is time for the Third World countries to read the writing on the wall and make a common cause to defend their national honour and sovereignty. The Chinese have been more than generous in offering help and assistance that can enable countries like Pakistan to move towards self-reliance and rid themselves of their perpetual bondage to the US aid. Washington's rebuff to Beijing has a special meaning for Pakistan, as the row has been precipitated by China's willingness to assist Pakistan in the field of missile technology. How far the Americans can go in their blind opposition to their perceived nuclear threat from Pakistan has been yet again comprehensively brought home. However, it is for Islamabad to take cognizance of the recurring signals and work out an appropriate strategy to meet the challenge.

Sharif Interview With Indian Paper Reported

BK0405152191 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 4 May 91 p 10

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] Islamabad, May 3: Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has said that India and Pakistan should adopt a realistic approach on Kashmir issue and find a solution that was honourable for both the countries.

In a recent interview with INDIA TODAY, the Prime Minister said that Kashmir is such a serious matter that if we do not resolve it, it will squeeze all the blood out of us.

He said we should adopt a realistic approach and get down to it. That is what I told Indian Premier Mr. Chandra Shekhar at Male that an honourable solution of the Kashmir problem be found.

Replying to a question Mian Nawaz Sharif said I will be more than willing to discuss all these issues with my counterpart in India. It is a solemn pledge, but I would like to see the same spirit on the other side.

The Prime Minister said both the countries have limitations. "See what India is doing in Kashmir. It is a disputed territory and what is being done there causes great concern here.

To a question Mr. Nawaz Sharif denied Pakistan's involvement in East Punjab and Kashmir adding there was no such thing and that he had given a solemn assurance to Mr. Chandra Shekhar about it. Give us any evidence of that. In fact, Mr. Chandra Shekhar has himself denied it," he added.

About US aid Mian Nawaz Sharif said we are not very upset with the suspension of aid and we have not requested the United States for its revival. We have to decide whether we want to increase our dependence or try to stand on our two feet.

He said we have said many times that our nuclear programme is for peaceful purpose. It is an internal matter, we will not go and give an account on this. Aid or no aid we should mind our own business. We do not need to give any assurance to anyone.

Mian Nawaz Sharif referring to the Shariah [Islamic law] Bill said it underlined my consensus approach. He believed that Islam was a faith of progress and welfare and this Bill will take us in that direction.

He said the Shariah bill was never supposed to create a theocracy and will not create a theocracy.

Rejecting the idea that he was following vindictive policies against the People's Party [PPP] leader, the Prime Minister said, "I want to set healthy and honourable traditions. We want to strengthen democracy."

He said in fact what the PPP leader did was the ugliest thing, the way she victimised her political opponents and tried to tarnish the good name of my family. As for the case against Asif Zardari it was purely a judicial problem, we have nothing to do with him.

Referring to liberal policy of investment and privatisation the Prime Minister said the results have been all positive. The government has allowed free foreign exchange transactions and any foreigner can now open a foreign exchange account in Pakistan.

He said now the people would not have to go through regulatory mechanisms. There was no licence, no investment limit, you do not have to come to the government, just make your feasibility report and go to the banks for money.

The Prime Minister said now he realised the this could be negated if the banks were not fully privatised. So that is the top most priority, he added.

The Prime Minister about the economic change said this was what we were really proud of. There were all kind of fears, but the feedback now was very good. We have already begun to attract foreign investment.

He said foreign exchange reserves, despite all the fears about the flight of capital, have gone up. We are rapidly moving towards making Pakistan an open market. Basically he said he wanted minimal government, that was small but efficient. The government has no business to run industry, hotels, cement plants, restaurants or architecture consultancies.

About the impact of these changes on the rural life he said the villages needed employment, which can only be provided by the private sector. To set up more industry the government has completely exempted all investment in rural areas from tax.

Presently he said 40 industrial units were on sale, which he believed was the largest such sale in the world history.

The Prime Minister said the employees of the denationalised units would get 12 to 18 months notice or a golden handshake. There is a lot of corruption if the government gets involved in running business.

Replying to a question about the elections in India the Prime Minister said "We are happy to deal with whosoever represents the will of the Indian people, whether Prime Minister is a B or C means the same thing to us.

New Diplomatic Offensive on Kashmir Urged

BK0405142391 Lahore THE NATION in English 4 May 91 p 6

[Editorial: "New Delhi's Goodwill Bait"]

[Text] When the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan had met in New Delhi for their fourth round of talks, the people of the Kashmir Valley had, as a protest, observed a general strike. It was an explicit disapproval of any move at rapprochement between India and Pakistan without resolving the Kashmir problem. Any misgivings among the Kashmiris about Pakistan-India negotiations, basically aimed at defusing tension and taking confidence-building measures in order to minimise chances of a conflict, were certainly misplaced. Pakistan has time and again categorically reaffirmed that, though it seeks peace and good neighbourly relations with India, there will be no quid pro quo on Kashmir. Nevertheless, the Kashmir issue was for so long consigned to limbo, notwithstanding occasional reaffirmations of support to the right of self-determination of Kashmiris, that it was almost forgotten by the world as an unresolved issue. Had the Kashmiri freedom-fighters not risen in revolt against India occupation, and brought to the fore their neglected cause, it may not even have figured so prominently in Indo-Pakistan talks. The Kashmiris are, therefore, to an extent justified to get alarmed when they hear of an India-Pakistan normalisation process being pursued, regardless of India's adamant refusal to discuss Kashmir.

New Delhi has been consistently tring to sell peace and friendship to Pakistan, albeit its recipe presupposes delinking of Kashmir from the normalisation of relations. While it may be rightly argued that steps ought to be taken that are necessary to avert confrontation with India, since Pakistan neither has the desire nor it can afford to go to war, but all the same there is need to avoid making gestures that may be seen as an indication of our vulnerability to New Delhi's goodwill bait. There is no harm if Indian filmstars and literary figures, visit Pakistan and talk of peace and amity between the two countries, but any official association with such projects at a time when the Kashmiris are being massacred by the Indian forces is likely to send wrong signals to the Valley. We have yet to hear of an Indian, however, liberal or secular, who has the moral courage to concede that India has no business to be in Kashmir and hold its people at gunpoint. Why should the Pakistanis be at all apologetic about Kashmir being an irritant to Indo-Pakistan relations. It was indeed reassuring to hear the Prime Minister referring to the Kashmir issue at the Muslim League meet, but perhaps it was not enough to call upon the UN to fulfil its international obligations. It is time for the Foreign Office to launch another diplomatic offensive to acquaint the world with what is right now happening in the Indian-occupied Kashmir and what the comity of nations owe to people fighting for freedom.

Sri Lanka

Troops Smash LTTE Barrier, Capture Stronghold

BK0405114891 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 4 May 91

[Text] Government troops backed by air cover have smashed the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] barrier at Thandikulam, two miles north of Vavuniya town. They marched off the Jaffna Road, flagged by thick jungle, and captured the LTTE stronghold of Nochimoddai.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that the LTTE suffered heavy casualties in the Thandikulam and Nochimoddai battles. One soldier was killed and five wounded in the operation. Security forces had taken the LTTE head on and inflicted another crushing defeat on the terrorists. The LTTE had initially tried to stand and fight, but their lines had soon crumbled and many had died. The remaining cadres fled.

Latest reports say the troops are consolidating their position at Nochimoddai. The sources said security forces were continuing their operations against terrorist targets at Mullaittivu. The curfew in the Vavuniya and Mullaittivu districts are still in force.

Three LTTE suspects were arrested by the security forces south of Batticaloa.

Five Killed as Boat With Explosives Hits Ship

BK0505090691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 5 May 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, five sailors were killed when a boat loaded with explosives rammed into the ship anchored off Point Pedro on the northern coast. Military officials in Colombo said the occupants of the boat, reported to be LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] rebels, were also killed in the blast.

30 'Militants', 20 Soldiers Killed in North

BK0705092391 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 7 May 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, at least 30 militants and 20 soldiers were killed in fierce fighting in Northern Vavuniya with the government claiming heavy casualty on the militants due to air strike and artillery gunfire. An Army spokesman in Colombo said that the advancing troops from Vavuniya to the north encountered heavy resistance when they crossed Omanthai, about 15 km from Vavuniya, with militants putting up stiff resistance from their well-entrenched bunkers and firing positions.

In another incidents reported during the past 24 hours naval gunboats destroyed three LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] boats killing three militants off Point Pedro and another near Thondamanar in Northern Jaffna. The militants killed two guards in Ampara and a soldier in Medawachchiya in the east, officials said.

4 Top LTTE Leaders Reported Killed

BK0705103191 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0937 GMT 7 May 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, May 07 (LANKAPUVATH)—Internecine fighting has broken out in the ranks of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leadership resulting in four of its top rungers, including former Jaffna leader Dominique, being killed.

According to reports reaching LANKAPUVATH from Jaffna, Dominique had been eliminated a few days ago for alleged misappropriation of LTTE funds extorted from the public. Two other leaders one code named Salim and another Senkattur had fought a duel in which both were killed. A fourth senior LTTE cadre from Jaffna was also executed as he had fallen foul of the leadership.

Meanwhile, latest reports from the northern battlefront, as the security forces offensive entered its seventh day, state there was heavy fighting in the Vavuniya District as ground troops backed by air cover were closing in on the main LTTE jungle base at Pappamottai north of Omanthai which was often used by LTTE deputy leader Mahattaya. Official sources said there were heavy LTTE losses. They said the terrorists were being drawn out into the open and hit by artillery and aerial attack. The sources said terrorist leaders were forcing women cadres into the front and a number of them were killed, when they tried to charge the security force lines. The sources said LTTE casualties were very heavy Sunday and Monday and an estimated 60 terrorists had been killed. Eighteen soldiers including two officers were killed in fierce fighting on Sunday. The security forces have taken seven LTTE strongholds during the current offensive in Vavuniya, 254 kilometres from Colombo, as they advanced along the Vavuniya-Jaffna road. Official sources said the terrorists had brought in reinforcements from several areas a desperate attempt to stem the rout and prevent an eight the main base from falling to government troops.

The Navy, having further heightened vigilance on the northern seas, destroyed four terrorist boats Monday—three of them at Thondaimannar and a fourth off the coast of Point Pedro. One soldier was killed and two wounded by terrorists at Horowapathana close to the border of north central and eastern provinces. Two homeguards on sentry duty were killed by the LTTE at Pillamalai in Amparai.